The European Left and the Jewish Question, 1848–1992

Between Zionism and Antisemitism

Edited by
Alessandra Tarquini

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Introduction

Alessandra Tarquini

The Research Topic

This book intends to answer a question: has there been a specific way in which the left-wing political and cultural movements, in Western Europe, have considered Jewish people in the last two hundred years? As German philosopher Karl Löwith wrote in 1949, in their long history, socialists have aimed to liberate humanity from suffering and slavery and, as heirs of Jewish-Christian culture and of the Enlightenment, they believed that the ultimate goal of political action and of history was the emancipation of humankind (Löwith 1949: 33–51). From this starting point, it is important to ask how socialism considers the Jews. Are they regarded as oppressed, and therefore they participate to the struggle that will lead to the advent of a new civilization, or do they hinder the realization of socialism because of their attachment to a religious identity?

The relationship between socialists and Jewish people has taken many forms in Western Europe, influenced by the national specificities of each country. At the same time, as this volume intends to show, the left-wing movements share common trends drawn from a collective repertoire of representations and meanings. To highlight the different aspects of the

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matter, the book is divided in three parts, each dedicated to a major theme. The first is devoted to the theorists of socialism, the second one to the representations of antisemitism in left-wing culture, and the third one to the perception of the Arab-Israeli conflict. These three themes allow an analysis of the relationship between the European Left and the Jews from the second half of the nineteenth century to recent times.

This book is not a volume on the history of the Jewish minorities or a research on antisemitism in modern history. The scope is to analyse the relationship between the Left and the Jewish question from the point of view of European socialists (Liebman 1979, Rothman & Lichter 1982, Mendes 2014, Jacobs 2017). Being socialist encompass a multitude of experiences and ideological and political stances, so in the upcoming pages many incarnations will appear: from socialists to revolutionary syndicalists, from social-democrats to liberal-socialists and communists.

Thus, the analysis is limited to Western Europe, where the socialism was born. Eastern Europe and Russia, whose histories have been majorly impacted by socialism and Jewish minorities, are not part of this discussion. This is because antisemitism both in pre-Soviet Russia and in the USSR is a very significant chapter of the history of Jewish persecutions in the twentieth century, and it would deserve an independent analysis. Besides from 1917 onwards, and even more so after 1945, with the divisions created by the Cold War, the history of socialism in the USSR and in Eastern Europe developed in a very different direction from Western Europe, and a comparison between the two is not immediate. In the countries taken into account, from 1945 onwards, the many voices of socialism, from the moderates to the radicals, were primarily concerned with the problem of democracy, and on how to secure their objectives within it, accepting pluralism and disputed their positions on the Jewish question, on antisemitism, and on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Thus, circumscribing the work to Western Europe brings to the fore the possibility to analyse comparable political and cultural experiences.

To do this, the book draws from multiple disciplines: philosophical analysis, the history of political thought, the history of antisemitism, the history of cultural representation and memory construction, the history of intellectual elites, the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict and, last but not least, the history of political parties and political movements. The authors have collated a variety of research sources and methodologies, and the book brings together scholars from different historiographical traditions and interpretative paradigms. In this respect, the volume confirms what

was already evident, that is to say that the relationship between the Left and Jewish minorities changes according to the national contexts. Thus, there are countries where the topic has already undergone serious investigation, while in others it has only been explored briefly or in most recent times, as the state of the art clearly shows.

The State of the Art

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the relations between the Left and the Jews did not constitute a research topic because no one on either side—neither the Jews nor the many incarnations of the Left—was willing to question the widespread conviction that their histories had a lot in common. The emancipation of the Jews had begun during the French Revolution and with the establishment of the principles of the Enlightenment in Europe and in the world. Modern Zionism, which would lead to the birth of Israel, had its origins in the political culture of the Second International, and at the beginning of the twentieth century Eastern European socialism had authoritative representatives and leaders among Jewish intellectuals. And most of all, from the Thirties until the end of the war, Jews fought side by side with left-wing militants against Nazi-Fascism and the persecutions that culminated in the *Shoah.*

In this scenario, German historian Edmund Silberner's works from the late Forties were truly ground-breaking. In 1946 he published a study on Charles Fourier in which he observed that the father of Utopian Socialism had defined the Jews as a parasitic sect (Silberner 1946: 245–266, Silberner 1947: 339–362, Silberner 1948: 61–80). Moreover in 1949 his very successful essay *Was Marx anti-Semite?* claimed that the writings of young Marx contained several antisemitic elements (Silberner 1997: 361–401, Silberner 1949: 323–342). Arguing that the same contempt for the Jews is to be found in the publications of Karl Kautsky, Victor Adler, and others, Silberner showed the existence of an antisemitic tradition in the socialist thought and among international socialist leaders. His works did not spark any significant discussion among scholars of social sciences. One exception was Austrian historian Peter Pulzer, who responded to Silbener by denying the existence of any form of antisemitism within the German and Austrian Left. What ultimately mattered were the political choices of individuals and parties, as in the case of the social-democrats, who had openly opposed the discriminations and persecutions of Jewish people (Pulzer 1964).

In any case, this debate was very limited during the Fifties and Sixties, and was not explored by historians. It was mainly journalists and intellectuals who discussed the topic, especially in relation to the Cold War's new geopolitical order, and in particular by those who denounced Stalin's violent persecutions of the early Fifties. This remained unchanged even after the Eichmann trial, the first judicial proceeding for crimes against humanity that, gaining international resonance, transformed forever the perception of Jewish people and of antisemitism. At the end of the Fifties, the most significant contribution on the matter was published by historian of socialism George Lichteim (Lichteim 1968: 314–342), who argued that up to 1945 there had been two kinds of Left: an antisemitic one, well represented by the Fourierist and Proudhonist tradition, and an other one expressed by the Socialist Party that had built an important dialogue with the Jewish minority. According to Lichteim, after the Second World War, the antisemitic Left had disappeared as a result of the trauma of Nazi-Fascism that had radically shifted the relationship between the Left and Jewish people (Lichteim 1968: 332). Confident that the only actual left-wing antisemitism was the kind displayed by Fourier and Toussenel, and furthermore convinced that anti-Jewish hatred was to be traced back to Christianity, Lichteim believed that the aversion towards the Jews was just an expression of the impoverished working classes.

At the beginning of the Seventies, the debate grew along some of the points that had been highlighted by Silberner, but especially thanks to George L. Mosse, who has transformed the study the history of the twentieth century and of its watershed moments. Scholars are still today pretty much split in two groups, with some of them having embraced Mosse's interpretation, while others positioning themselves closer to Lichteim's theories.

Mosse's work concentrated on the German social democracy, on Marx, and on Kautsky. Both Marx and Kautsky believed that the Jews, that they connected to wealth and hence capitalism, were estranged from the human condition. According to them, Mosse recalled, "the Jew, seen as an urban merchant, linked to the ghetto both physically and spiritually, typified a state of dependence which perpetuated the feudal Middle Ages within the dialectical progress of mankind" (Mosse 1971a: 19). Such views on the Jews were widespread among German socialists and communists from the end of the First World War. Mosse demonstrated how the emergence of the antisemitic Right, critical of the German Republic, led to a partition: the socialists began to question Marx's and Kautsky's analyses and to show

a different sensitivity to the Jewish question, while the communists remained faithful to Marxist teachings. This did not change with the Second World War, since it concerned the very cultural core of the Left, as Mosse pointed out in a 1973 essay, in which he compared the German intellectuals emigrated to America in the Thirties with the New Left generation of the Sixties. He illustrated how the reaction of socialists and communists to the Nuremberg Laws denied specificity to the antisemitic issue, that is to say that they did not ask why Jewish people had been the target of Nazi violence (Mosse 1973: 113). As it occurred in Fascist Italy, the German Left underestimated Nazism and antisemitism. According to these intellectuals, Germany was governed by a regime with no cultural substance, ideology, or a defined political program. This Marxist-based socialist humanism saw the Fascists and the Nazis as barbarians, and was not interested in analysing the characteristics of totalitarian regimes. In this sense, for the socialists, it did not matter if the victims of Nazi-Fascism were Jews, workers, or political dissidents.

In the Sixties, these left-wing intellectuals, greatly influenced by the Frankfurt School and later by Herbert Marcuse, the most prominent member of New Left, grew very critical of mass society and consumerism (Mosse 1973: 113). They departed from orthodox Marxism, to give way to new forms of radical criticism, developing the idea that capitalist society could manipulate the masses via propaganda and create individuals with a false consciousness. Convinced that no significant difference existed between the manipulative power of Fascism and that of post-war liberal democracies, they presented the capitalistic establishment as an oppressive system akin to those engendered by totalitarian regimes. In line with this, they did not analyse the regimes' projects, cultures, institutions, ruling classes, and, more generally, their specific historical forms processes either. These authors, Mosse noticed, did not interpret the persecution of Jewish people as a distinctive feature of German and Italian totalitarianism. Rather they considered it a form of structural violence no more significant than others, like the oppression of people of colour, seen as far more violent than what the Jews were currently enduring.

Mosse raised the first true historiographical issue on the relationship between the Left and Jewish people. So, if we believe that the multifaceted socialist Left has shown limitations towards the Jewish question from Marx onwards, then we are to agree with Mosse and we can find expressions of this in the different national cases. If we marry Lichteim's ideas instead, confining hindrances to the Left-Jewish relationship to Fourier,

de Toussenel or even Sorel and revolutionary syndicalism, then our conclusions on the topic will be different both in regard to the identity of the Left, and to its relationship with the Jewish minorities. In this case, the problem would be less significant within the Marxist Left that could be exempted from the analysis.

In the Seventies this discussion grew, however remaining marginal both in the studies of Jewish history, and in those on socialism and workers movements. Nonetheless, two main thematic areas can be identified in the scholarship: studies about the protagonists of Marxist political thought, and research on the relations between the Left and the Jews in the different national contexts. Among the scholars who have chosen to analyse socialist political thought, the most relevant contributions are those of Robert S. Wistrich, Pierre Birnbaum, Jack Jacobs and Enzo Traverso. These authors, who have different academic backgrounds and political orientations, analysed similar themes and focused on the thought of socialist authors connected with the Second International and beyond Marxism, albeit drawing from them dissimilar conclusions. Wistrich and Birnbaum criticized socialism harshly, maintaining that the overwhelming majority of social-democrat political leaders had been anti-Zionists and had argued for the most radical assimilation of the Jews in the national and social fabric (Wistrich 1979, Wistrich 2012, Birnbaum 1987: 157–170, Birnbaum 1988). Jack Jacobs and Enzo Traverso have instead suggested a different hypothesis. In his 1992 book, Jacobs argued that early twentieth-century socialists and social-democrats did not share a unanimous position on the Jewish question (Jacobs 1985: 400–404, Jacobs 1992). Different personalities, family backgrounds and cultural environments produced different opinions on Jewish people. Kautsky, for instance, was a committed assimilationist, while Bernstein, after the First World War, questioned the practicability of assimilation and reviewed his position on the matter. Enzo Traverso developed his reflection examining a hundred-year-long timeframe, from Marx's juvenile texts on the Jewish question to Trotskyist thinker Abraham Léon's volume *La conception matérialiste de la question juive*, published in 1943, after the author's death in Auschwitz (Traverso 1990, Traverso 1999, Traverso 2004). According to him, the main problem is not the Marxist tradition but its link with the Enlightenment. The most renowned representatives of the socialist movement had not been able to acknowledge and accept the Jewish aspiration to its own distinct identity, nor to understand the significance and impact of antisemitism.

They interpreted the Jewish question in terms of economic conflict, wondering if it was better to conceive Jewish people as a caste or as a social class, and defined the persecution of Jews as a socially backward phenomenon, the weapon of the bourgeoisie, and as a remnant of Christianity-influenced obscurantism. For them, the emancipation of the Jewish population of Western Europe, especially in France, was an example that would be inevitably followed and attained by all countries, as civil societies progressively evolved.

As aforementioned, the second strand of research that began to develop from the Seventies pertains to the relationship of the Left with Jewish question in the different European nations. As of now, two comprehensive works have been written, exploring the positions of multiple political expressions of socialism up to recent days, one on France and one on Italy. The first one is *L'Antisémitisme a gauche* by Michel Dreyfus, one of the maximum experts on the topic, and the author of one of the essays in this volume (Dreyfus 2009). Published for the first time in 2009, and reissued several times, Dreyfus' book asks explicitly if there is a specific and unique form of antisemitism in the Left. As he also addresses in the essay presented here, historians have not tended to the topic, even though it is evident that already from the first half of the nineteenth century, and with the Dreyfus Affair, forms of antisemitism have existed that cannot be traced back to anti-capitalist protest. In the twentieth century this is especially true for the radical left that has in some occasions spoken in terms that are ambiguously or explicitly antisemite.

In this respect, Dreyfus was a trailblazer, opening up the space for further works on the topic, like Alessandra Tarquini's *La sinistra italiana e gli ebrei: socialismo, sionismo e antisemitismo dal 1892 al 1992*, published in late 2019 (Tarquini 2019). Tarquini reconstructs the role that the Jews have had in those hundred years of Italian history, from the birth of the Italian Socialist Party until the Nineties, by focusing on three themes that traditionally belong to different research areas: antisemitism, Zionism, and the Arab-Israeli conflict. The book brings to the fore the cultural and political history of a complicated relationship. Turn-of-the-century Italian Marxism was different from that of the Thirties or the Seventies, and many political and ideological experiences found a home under the umbrella of socialism. Nonetheless, assimilationism and anti-Zionism have been, in most cases, a common thread joining these experiences together, albeit with many variables. The conclusion that can be drawn from Tarquini's

book is that the Italian socialists historically and prolongedly underestimated the significance of the Jewish question.

In addition to these books, many other studies exist today, making it difficult to compare works that speak of different nations, topics, and moments in history. As it will be shown in the second and third parts of this volume, the two most common themes are antisemitism and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Research on the former concentrates on its manifestations in left-wing parties, but also on how the Left presented to its militants and to public opinion the persecution of Jewish people of totalitarian regimes. The second strand of research concentrates, instead, on Israel and the Middle-Eastern conflict, on which much has been written over the last fifty years. These studies discuss the relationship between on the one hand, socialist and communist parties and, on the other Israel, beginning with the wars the Jewish state has fought with the neighbouring Arab states. These works often highlight the permeable boundary between anti-Zionism and antisemitism, revealing how many leftist representatives engaged with Israel in ways that were not divorced from their opinions on the Jewish question in general.

In this large variety of themes, some common traits can be recognized. First of all, there is an evident difference between communist and social-democratic policies. In European countries, with their respective particularities and differences, since the end of the nineteenth century, and for the following hundred years, the right-wing factions of the social-democratic parties had created friendly relations with Jews in the workers' movement and had been willing to accommodate the requests of the Zionists, who in contrast had always been attacked by communists and, for a long period, albeit irregularly, by socialists. Communist parties never changed their anti-Zionist orientation, and, if not for brief exceptions, they remained critical of the creation of a Jewish nation until relatively recent times. Overall, the relationship between the Left and the Jews in a country is an indicator of the Jewish community's nationalization process. In most cases, the left-wing parties have been among the main supporters of Jewish assimilation in the diverse national contexts, pushing for fuller integration and total recognition, but at the same time they denied specific aspects of the Jewish question and found it difficult to acknowledge a people who define themselves on religious and cultural grounds.

As highlighted by George L. Mosse, the Left has struggled to define the Jews, from the times of Marx until today. In the name of proletarian internationalism, and the tradition of the labour movement, several

left-wing intellectuals and politicians have denied specificity to the Jewish issue, envisioning its solution within their more general plan to transform and improve society through the involvement and liberation of the oppressed, regardless of their cultural, religious, linguistic and national identities.

Given the above, and taking into account the many contributions on these matter that have preceded this volume, we are aware of the limits of this research, which does not claim to be exhaustive. Our work is still ongoing and by presenting it here we hope to spark novel interest and research on these problems, which might lead to future collaborations.

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Antisemitism and the French Left: Five (or Maybe Six) Types in a Long-Term Perspective

Michel Dreyfus

A significant amount of literature exists on the history of socialism in France, from its origins in the nineteenth century until today. During this period, a large number of Jews became involved with the socialist movement, intended in the broader sense of the term. The first country in the world to emancipate Jewish people in 1791, France was emulated by many other European countries in the nineteenth century. Despite this, antisemitism had a new resurgence in Germany, Austria, France and Russia from the 1880s. However, France was a pioneer in matters of the emancipation of the Jews, and as a consequence, many of them were grateful and identified with the values of progress and universalism defended by the Second Republic and, even more so, by the Third. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that out of 39 million people, in France there were only 80,000 Jews, two thousandths of the population, making the French Jewish community one of the smallest in the big European countries of the 1880s.

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Such adherence to the ideals of socialism led many Jews to join its ranks both in France and in Europe, like the names of Karl Kautsky, Rosa Luxembourg, Léon Blum or Emanuele Modigliani demonstrate. Jews played an equally important role during the Russian Revolution and the first years of the USSR. Think of Trotsky, Radek, Kamenev or Zinoviev, who were the targets of violent attacks from the extreme right that denounced the existence of a global "Jewish-Bolshevik plot." In France during the Second World War, many Jews, especially foreigners, fought in the MOI against Nazism, under the direction of the Communist Party. Therefore, the connection between Jewish people and the socialist movement grew strong in France after the nineteenth century.

In this essay, I discuss the painful and less known matter of antisemitism in the French Left during those years. Much research has been conducted on the history of antisemitism and socialism, but very little work has been done on antisemitism on the Left, and it is important to explain why. The notions of solidarity and progress that the left claims to embrace are incompatible with the rejection, the exclusion, and the call to murder of antisemitism. It thoroughly opposes an "us against others" vision of the world, defending universal values, while antisemitism, motivated by fear and hate, refuses an entire social group.

Historians' lack of interest to investigate antisemitism on the left is primarily ideological. The majority of those who worked on socialism were socialists themselves, and could not conceive that antisemitism might have infiltrated the left. As a consequence, left-wing antisemitism flourished, and the fact that it is less common on the left than on the right is no good reason to ignore it. Despite the few studies conducted mostly by foreign scholars, the matter went unexamined for long, until the publication of my 2009 book.[1] Before then, its causes had remained unknown, its manifestations were unclear, and its influence was untraced. Instead, it is important to study this trend that, in all its forms, has existed within the socialist movement from its birth until today.

What did the workers' movement, a concept somewhat obsolete today, look like? It encompassed many entities, from small self-proclaimed utopic socialist groups to Marxism in its structured form of the First International. Then, from the 1880s, it incorporated various socialist organizations that first gave birth to the Section Française de l'Internationale ouvrière (SFIO)

[1] Dreyfus 2009, republished in 2011 with an afterword. All matters in this paper can be found in my book, except for the sixth form of antisemitism discussed on page 10.

in 1905, and ten years later to the la Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT). It engendered anarchist groups, and the Human Rights League, established right amid the Dreyfus Affaire. These organizations and their schools of thought were followed by the Communist Party in 1920, by its far-left opponents, and by the pacifist groups born during the 1930s. Antisemitism existed in workers' movements from the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, but its history does not coincide with that of these organizations. Consequently, it is difficult to conduct research on the topic, since its manifestations have left little in writing.

From the Revolution until today, antisemitism endured in France under various political regimes taking very different shapes. It is possible to count five of them whose intensity varied greatly through time. The most intense period of manifestation of antisemitism was in 1898–1899, during the Dreyfus Affair. It then reappeared in the second half of the 1930s, and again in the course of the Second World War. These phases were followed by much quieter periods. The end of the Dreyfus Affair (1906) interrupted the progression of antisemitism in France until the 1920s. Afterwards, however, it regained momentum in Europe, first, from 1933 in Poland, Germany and Austria, and subsequently France and Italy from 1937. It reached its apex with the Final Solution of 1943. After the Liberation of France, antisemitism retreated from French society. However, during the 1950s, former socialist Paul Rassinier began to doubt the reality of the genocide. Additionally, today the criticism of the politics of Israel, often going hand in hand with the most virulent condemnation of Zionism, are not at times deprived of an antisemitic character. Therefore, antisemitism is the outcome of a multitude of factors, presenting substantial diversity.

These five forms are linked to each other, but also have their own specific characteristics, connected to the different manifestations that have existed throughout France's history. It is necessary to remember that anti-Judaism first, and antisemitism afterwards (the word antisemitism was coined by Wilhelm Marr, a former German socialist in 1879) were constructed on opposed images of the Jews. Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, the non-acceptance of the Jews was based on the Christian tradition of Judeophobia of the Middle Ages. With the birth of capitalism, Jews came to be associated with wealth and modernity. Antisemites denounced them through attacks against the "Rothschilds" as parvenus, whose quick economic ascent was scandalous. Such discourse lasted for a long time, and traces of it persist today. Such economic antisemitism was

succeeded by racial antisemitism from the early 1880s, with a powerful wave of developing in France and other European countries as a consequence of the economic crisis that shook the continent. Popularised in France by journalist Edouard Drumont, such wave was fomented by the rise of nationalism and the growth of racist ideology influencing the right, the extreme right, and the republicanism of the Left. At the same time, workers' organizations were taking their first steps. However, they were still weak, and hence permeable to antisemitism, like many records demonstrate. Nonetheless, from the start of 1898—in the middle of the Dreyfus Affair—thanks to the engagement of militants, of whom the most known was Jean Jaurès, the large majority of the socialist Left and of the anarchists understood that they had to cut ties with the antisemites. The Dreyfus Affair was thus a turning point in the history of antisemitism on the Left. Having become a minority, its defenders since then began to use formulas like: "I love the Jews and I'm not antisemitic, but anyway…"

In Brussels in 1898, Leonty Soloweitschik defended his dissertation in which he was the first to argue that not all the Jews were capitalists and that there was such a thing as a Jewish proletariat in Russia, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, the United States and other countries (Soloweitscik 2019). This contradicted the ideas of the time. The author of the dissertation explained how he struggled to convince his research director about the pertinence of his work since the professor had until then believed that all the Jews were bankers. Immediately published, the thesis was well received by many political commentators, among them Charles Gide, the theorist of the cooperative movement, and by the anarchists. However, the work did not capture the attention of socialist movements neither in France nor in Europe. Nonetheless, in Belgium, Leonty Soloweitschik wrote an open letter on *Le Peuple*, the daily newspaper of the Belgian Workers Party, to socialist Edmond Picard, who had defended antisemitism on the pages of the same magazine. The letter ended with the following words: "To invoke hate among men is not socialist". Antisemitism appeared to be quite widespread in the workers' movement in Belgium, even if several of its leaders, like Emile Vandervelde, opposed it. Nevertheless, except for some historians, Soloweitschik's dissertation fell into oblivion for a century.

The third instance of antisemitism on the Left arose in between the wars. During the economic crisis that hit France from 1931, xenophobia and antisemitism spread in the extreme right, growing so vastly that they reached even the Left. Antisemitism developed for very specific reasons.

The two main grounds on which it had until then thrived—the Jews as symbols of capitalism and then racism—lost terrain. Instead, as an answer to the economic crisis, the arguments stated in the *Protocols of the Elders of Sion* appeared. Circulated widely by the extreme right, the book explained that Jewish, people with all their privilege, held the keys to the world's financial resources. This delirious text became particularly successful in the United States thanks to the years-long support of Henry Ford, as well as in Germany, where it greatly influenced Hitler. It also gained a large audience in France, where pacifism was now strong after the trauma of the Great War. After the end of the nineteenth century, pacifism had moved to the core of socialist thinking. Guilty of not having stopped the massacres of twenty years before, and incapable of comprehending the novelty of Nazism, a large portion of the Left grew defended an increasingly self-justifying and resigned pacifism. They condemned antifascists who argued for firmness against the Nazis, as dangerous and irresponsible. According to the pacifists, the Jews wanted to wage war against Hitler to defend their co-religionists persecuted in Germany. This analysis engendered a new image of the Jews, now denounced as the cause of a conflict with Hitler. Additionally, they questioned Lèon Blum, leader of the SFIO and head of the Front Populaire government, who criticised them. Blum was condemned through an antisemitic discourse that grew uncontrolled. On the eve of the Second World War, the Socialist Party was at the edge of splitting between pacifists and antifascists, each with pretty much equal influence and strength. Thus, pacifism became a vector of antisemitism on the Left, which led to a large number of men of the Left to collaborate with Vichy and sometimes even with the Nazis in ways that, for matters of space, cannot be discussed here.

After the dark years of the war, antisemitism retreated from French society, because of the shock caused by the discovery of concentration and extermination camps, and by the Final Solution. From that moment onwards, except for some insignificant slips, antisemitism vanished from the rhetoric of socialists and communists. However, the fourth type of antisemitism emerged in the far-left during the 1950s in the guise of revisionism, and then ten years later, of denialism. The former diminished the significance of the genocide, whilst the latter negated it and called it an invention of the Jews for their own advantage. Both are based on a denial of reality and a schematic and economistic-based vision of Marxism. Both of them equally reject democracy and anti-Fascism, considering them ploys, and are deeply anti-Communist. Revisionism and Holocaust

denialism were the brainchildren of two militants, Paul Rassinier and Pierre Guillame. The former began as a member of the SFIO and then joined the anarchists, whilst the latter was part of that extreme Left that descended from Amedeo Bordiga, one of the three founders of the Communist Party of Italy. Because of this rejection of democracy and anti-Fascism, and for putting on the same level Nazi Germany and the United States engaged in the Vietnam War, the ultra-left became a matrix of negationism. Rassinier and Guillame eventually broke away from their political groups. Rassinier was expelled from the Anarchist Federation, but only ten years after he had built a relationship with Maurice Bardèche, the main theorist of the French right after the Liberation. For his part, it took Guillame, Rassinier's spiritual heir, five years to stop his connections with the ultra-left. Revisionism and Holocaust denialism however only touched small political circles, before the latter gained a larger audience thanks to Roger Garaudy's expulsion from the Communist Party in 1970. In conclusion, both revisionism and denialism were conceived by militants who had been fed old stereotypes that combined the economic antisemitism of the nineteenth century with the pacifism of the 1930s, and with the new element that was the State of Israel.

To understand the role of Israel, a little summary is essential. From the interwar period, criticism of Zionism, and then of Israel, led to the fifth form of leftist antisemitism, that remained marginal for a long time. Until the Great War, the socialist and anarchist Left had been critical or at best indifferent towards Zionism. From the 1920s, the French socialists and the Socialist Workers' International adopted a more open attitude towards it, before the SFIO steadfastly supported Israel. Until the Second World War, the Communist Party had rejected the Zionist project, but without showing any antisemitism. Later, after having briefly supported Israel at its beginnings, as the International Communist Movement had, the SFIO distanced from it, again without expressing antisemitism, even if its denunciation of "Zionism" was not sometimes exempt from some ambiguities. For its part, the far Left had considered Zionism as a form of colonialism from the 1930s, albeit with many nuances. Israel aroused debates among anarchists, less among Trotskyists. From the 1960s, such condemnation, combined with support to the Algerian FLN and to Nasser's Egypt, led some anti-colonialists, among whom Jacques Vergès is the most renown, to an "anti-Zionism" that was more and more openly antisemitic. After the Six-Days War, the growing support of the extreme Left for the Palestinians, in full bloom after May 1968, led to the far Left's increasingly

strong hostility towards the Jewish State. Since then, the attitude of the far Left about Israel was linked to that developed on the conflict in the Middle East. From the 1970s, some activists claimed that Israel behaved towards the Palestinians as the Nazi had towards the Jews, but soon such language was abandoned. Similar ideas would cause scandal today, but at the time they were met only with indifference, as sensibilities about the Middle Eastern conflict varied considerably over time.

In addition to these five forms of left-wing antisemitism, there are others that are more circumstantial. Whether economic, racial, or pacifist, antisemitism is extremely rare among communists. Despite this, at the end of the Second World War, some contradictions existed in the words and the actions of the Communist Party. A call to arms rose against the antisemitic currents within the party's ranks, while at the same time its non-French Jewish activists and the majority of its foreign militants were marginalized. Eager to gain approval in the nation, the Communist Party dismissed without hesitation those whose name did not sound French. Was this antisemitism? In post-war France underestimating the specificity of the "Jewish problem" was the rule, and the perception of the genocide was much more limited than today, and therefore it can be argued that the Communist Party was only influenced by the spirit of the time. Until Stalin's death in 1953, the Party refused to see and denounce the antisemitism present in the socialist ranks. The Moscow trials (1936–1939) had an indisputable antisemitic connotation: many defendants, and first of them Trotsky, were Jews. But this was not acknowledged by the communists, nor by the socialist Left, if not for a few exceptions. Communist silence continued during the trials carried out in the various social states between 1948 and 1952, and again during the "Doctors' Plot" that was only resolved with Stalin's death. In fact, some Jewish socialists, like Léon Blum, Salomon Grumbach, and Jules Moch were also at the receiving end of PCF attacks that had antisemitic overtones.

Far from presenting themselves in their "purity", these five types of antisemitism on the Left most often influence each other and are connected, feeding off the persistence of the phenomenon throughout the decades. A set of representations was built, where the emphasis was given to this or that "argument", depending on the current political and intellectual context. Toussenel and Proudhon denounced the Jewish "race" even before racial theories were developed, whereas the socialists of the 1880s used such theories while also employing the image of the rich and privileged Jew. Rassinier did the same, but he was also influenced by the

antisemitic pacifism of the interwar period. Thus, the longevity of antisemitism, even on the Left, provided a variety of arguments for its justification. Nevertheless, unlike the right, leftist organizations never formally included antisemitism in their political programs. Then, to understand the remarks of some representatives of the Left, it is necessary to examine the, often complex, individual journeys of numerous political and unionist leaders and intellectuals, especially in between the wars: philosemites in the 1920s, many became antisemites a decade later.

Antisemitism is not just discourses or representations. It is a current of opinions whose importance varied considerably over time, in accordance with the political and social contexts where it manifested. Its history has to be measured through the influence of what political parties, trade unions, journalists, and intellectuals said, and its weight varied through the decades, as did its social appeal. Therefore, it is first necessary to evaluate its significance within the Left through history. Fourier made antisemitic remarks, but he remained virtually unknown in his lifetime, gaining notoriety much later. Toussenel was equally unheard of when he published in 1845 his *Juifs, rois de l'èpoque*. Republished two years later, a possible sign of a good reception, the book was not reissued for another forty years. Proudhon influenced greatly the French trade unionists from the end of the nineteenth century, but his anti-feminism was more influential among them than his antisemitism. It is striking to see how much his antisemitism, racism, and machismo are effectively ignored still today in the majority of works dedicated to him.

On another note, the antisemitic magazines and publications of the Left had a very limited audience. The *Revenue Socialist* (1885–1914) published a large amount of antisemitic articles since its very beginning in the 1880s, but it only had a few hundred subscribers by the eve of the First World War, and even less after 1945. Rassinier's books, circulating in the extreme anarchist left at the end of the 1950s, reached but a small number of readers, while revisionism and denialism were limited to even smaller circles. In conclusion, those who, on the Left, made antisemitic remarks were only a tiny minority. The right, and especially the far right, had infinitely superior forces, communicating in a much more violent fashion, and using mediums, like the press and publishing houses, that had nothing in common in terms of numbers with the Left, whether in the 1880s or in the 1930s. For instance, the Catholic newspaper *La Croix*, published since 1883 and read by more than 500,000 people, professed to be "the most anti-Jewish French magazine" during the Dreyfus Affair. It tirelessly

decried the speculative capitalism that, caused by the Jews, was ruling the country. Needless to say, the *Le Croix*, which still operates today, does not use such language anymore. Between the wars, many right-wing newspapers, and even more so from the extreme right (*La Liberté*, *Gringoire*, *L'Ami du peuple*, *Le Matin*, etc.), had a circulation of several hundred copies. Additionally, there were a large number of publications specialised in antisemitism. Whether during the 1880s or the 1930s, the Left was permeated by the virulent antisemitism of the far-right, which was much more influential. In fact, left-wing antisemitism was largely the outcome of the weakness of the Left.

Given the above, can we speak of the existence of left-wing specific antisemitism? Should we rather talk of it as a repetition of what the extreme right claimed? Each discourse needs to be contextualised. Was antisemitism on the Left a marginal matter? Reality is more complex than this. The limited dissemination of certain organs of the Left that engaged in antisemitic rhetoric cannot make us forget that they sometimes might gain a wider audience. That was the case with *La Vie Ouvrière* before 1914, or with *La Révolution Prolétarienne* in between the wars. Additionally, there is the more general matter of antisemitism in the workers' movements. To what extent did such antisemitic speech on the Left reflect what workers thought? Were these movements antisemitic and in what ways? Were workers less receptive to such matters? These questions have been addressed in regards to the years of the Dreyfus Affair (Lequin 1994: 385–408), but research still needs to be conducted for other historical periods.

The sixth type of antisemitism is developing today within the extreme Left. To discuss it, let's begin with two unquestionable issues. First, the French Left is currently undergoing a grave crisis that, for matters of space, cannot be discussed here. Secondly, antisemitism has been growing in the country for a good decade. In 2006, for the first time since the Second World War, a Jew, Ilan Halimi, was killed for no other reason than being Jewish. Since then, eleven more antisemitic killings have taken place in Toulouse, Montauban, and in Vincennes in a Hyper Cacher after the *Charlie Hebdo* attack, in addition to the murders of Sarah Halimi and Mireille Knoll in 2008. Such dark progression occurred also in other European countries, like Belgium, where four people were killed during the attack to the Jewish Museum of Belgium in 2014. Antisemitic episodes have increased in France of 74% in 2017–2018, and of 27% in

2018–2019.[2] Added to this reality is the proliferation of antisemitic websites and online conspiracies.

This antisemitism has been produced by diverse political movements that are primarily from the right. In 2014, an organization called "*Jour de Colére*" organised a demonstration in Paris where, again for the first time since World War II, tens of thousands of people cried "*A mort, le Juifs*" (kill the Jews). The far-right continues to spread old stereotypes about the Jews, even if Marin Le Pen did her best to clean the image of her party in this regard. However, during the presidential election of 2017, she wanted to promote to leader of her Front National a party member who had expressed denialist views. Following the scandal that ensued, she quickly replaced him. In a similar vein, the growth of the far right in many European countries—Germany, Austria, Spain, Hungary, Italy, Poland—is favouring the growth of antisemitism in ways that are too many to discuss here.

The sixth form of antisemitism in the far Left is based on three elements: the focus on the Arab-Israeli conflict, indifference towards antisemitism, and the increasing devastation carried out within its ranks by identitarian politics and racism. As always, new elements joined older ones, and left-wing antisemitism can only be explained by looking at all of them combined. Therefore, the engagement of the extreme Left towards the Arab-Israeli conflict can be traced back to the 1970s. However, its passivity in matters of antisemitism, and the growth within its ranks of identity-based and racist ideas, occurred through an insidious revolution that started three decades later.

The repercussions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in France have diminished over the last decade, eclipsed by the Arab Spring (2011) and by the following wars in Libya and the Middle East. However, the conflict is a lot older, dating back to the creation of Israel in 1948, and the wars the ensued from 1967 onwards. Such longevity explains the strong symbolic significance that the conflict still has today. The far-left sees the Palestinian cause as the most universal, an emblem of all the oppressed, and concentrated only on it. As a consequence, for the left, this conflict removed all other wars from view, whether old, new and deadlier, as well as other forms of oppression around the world. With around 50,000 victims, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is in 49th position in terms of

[2] Chambraud, Cécile. 2020. Augmentation générale des actes racistes et antisémites en France en 2019. *Le Monde*, January 27.

deadliness since the end of World War II, being significantly surpassed by others, like the war between Iran and Iraq in 1980 (1,000,000 deaths), the Algerian Civil War (at least 100,000 dead between 1991 and 1997), and the current Syrian War (350,000 deaths since 2011), and it would be easy to add more. Of course, it does not all come down to the number of those who perished during the war, who are always too many. The symbolism also matters. However, the left's undivided attention to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict led it to forget many other wars. Besides, such all-encompassing interest has sometimes been accompanied with unacceptable statements, like decrying the "genocide of the Palestinians." In this regard, it is important to remember that if the Palestinians were around 1,200,000 in 1948, they are today almost 5,000,000 in the West Bank and 1,650,000 in Israel. However, because of its duration, the passion it engendered, its connection to the genocide, and the fact that it can rekindle very old antisemitism manifested under the guise of anti-Zionism, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is still a very delicate topic. Is it necessary to add that it is essential to distinguish between Israel's legitimacy to exist—which cannot be questioned—and a criticism of its politics similar to that that can be moved to other countries?

The vigilance of the far-left on antisemitism has receded in the last fifteen years (Hirsch 2017), for many reasons. The first one is age-old. Just like the left, the extreme left thought, and still thinks, maybe subconsciously, that after the Dreyfus Affair, the problem of antisemitism has been resolved, and thinks itself immune to such plague after the Second World War. Thus it mobilized for other causes, first of them the Palestinians. Such a perspective, reinforced by the dissolution of anti-Fascist markers, began in the 1990s, and its effects are visible today. The new generations of the far-left have forgotten the war against Nazism, and are hardly concerned with the anti-Fascism that had driven the fight against antisemitism and racism in the 1930s, during the war, and in its aftermath. This is why the slow erosion of anti-Fascism in the far-left in the 1990s led to the abandonment of the war on antisemitism. Besides, in 1968 many far-left militants were of Jewish origin (Salles 2005: 307–312), but that generation has disappeared from the political scene. It has been replaced by activists of a different origin, especially in the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR) and in its successor, the New Anti-Capitalist Party (NPA). Heir of those who, during "*le joli mois de Mai*" thought of themselves as "German Jews", the LCR refused in 2006 to protest against the death of Ilan Halimi. The NPA's reaction to the recent killing of Jews, and its

incapacity to shake off an anti-Zionism that is increasingly concealing anti-semitism, confirms such evolution.

A third reason must be considered. The fading of anti-Fascism and the growing indifference towards antisemitism came hand in hand with the rise of identity politics, fuelled by debates on the veil, the headscarf, and the burka, from the 1980s onwards. Such debates have opened up today further discussions on the secularization of the state and on Islamism. Amplified by politics and the media, they engendered victimising and often competing memories that accuse white people of colonialism. Thus, the transformation is complete. Like the Left, the far-left has for long upheld universal and internationalist values, bringing together the "wretched of the world" through the fight for socialism. That is not the case today anymore. In the name of the right to be different, a part of the far-left privileges now the demands of identity politics. Without being openly antisemitic, it endorses an anti-Zionism that is more and more virulent and fused with a growing indifference concerning antisemitism. Such a disconcerting approach is especially noticeable in the NPS, but exists at large in the extreme Left.

These developments have caused divisions, even fractures, in the far-left. It has weakened its barriers against antisemitism, and at the same time, it has favoured the growth of an "Islamist Left". Under the guise of criticising Zionism, increasingly antisemitic statements have been expressed by small groups that call themselves far-leftists, and that support the Palestinians, and it is possible to register a progression of the Identitarian Left (Boucher 2018), especially in universities and among intellectuals. They support, not without nuances, post-colonialism, which is notoriously defended by the Parti des indigènes de la République (PIR). Postcolonial studies were born in India and gained influence in the United States in the 1970s. They have shed enormous light on our understanding of colonialism and processes of colonisation, which cannot be studied just by Europeans anymore, as it has been the case for too long. Besides, it is necessary to research the long-term effects of colonialism, well after colonised countries regained their independence in the 1960s.

However, the victimising and reductionist reading of post-colonialism from the part of the PIR can be problematic. It denounces white people, guilty of colonialism and imperialism, and it criticises the French state for being racist, but it does not speak against the discrimination and oppression that exist in many countries, especially Muslim countries. For instance, a PIR leader has written a text with a publisher from the far-left (Bouteldja 2016, Finkelstein 2001, Badiou Hazan, 2011), in which she

defends racism and antisemitism. The book has been applauded by many intellectuals. Such "post-colonial" theses are flourishing in sociology and in the political sciences,[3] where they are causing increasing reactions. The crisis currently lived by the socio-democratic Left both in France and in Europe prevents a deeper discussion of these ideas.

Supported by the extreme Left, "Islamic-leftism" has appeared in France at the start of the 2000s. In 2009, P.A. Taguieff described it thoroughly but gave it too much importance. He also claimed that all the Left, and firstly socialists, is responsible for its appearance, tracing back its origins to the Left's fundamentally antisemitic age-old hate:

> The relative fixation of anti-Jewish passions on the right during the Dreyfus Affair were nothing but a historical parenthesis like shown by the blaze of anti-Jewish hate that, in the 1930s and under the Occupation (how many socialist pacifists became enthusiastic collaborators!), took hold of the left—including trade unions—as much as the right (Taguieff 2008: 121).

Such perspective is unacceptable (Dreyfus 2009). It is well known that a great number of left-wing activists defected to the right and to the extreme right. This only shows that a significant number of leaders moved to the right… and thus had nothing to do with the left anymore! From the beginning of the nineteenth century, the responsibility of the Left and of the far-left in matters of antisemitism is infinitely less than that of the right and of the extreme right.

This sixth form of antisemitism on the Left nonetheless raises a certain number of questions. The "Islamic-left" has grown significantly in the last ten years, and we need to see if what was marginal ten years ago is less so today. What is the influence of such racist and identitarian ideas in today's France? Why are so many intellectuals permeable to them? How far will this change go? It does not concern just the far-left and the intellectual milieu, but it also reaches a much larger audience thanks to social media.

Other countries have manifested in their history such forms of antisemitism on the Left, especially Germany, Belgium with the socialist Edmond Picard at the end of the nineteenth century, and Italy (Toscano 2004, Luzzatto Voghera 2007, Tarquini 2019). This calls for a need to research this dark aspect of the Left also on an international level, both historically and in terms of current events.

[3] Guerrin, Michel. 2019. A la fac, deux camps s'affrontent à coup d'insultes, sur le mot de race. *Le Monde*, January 11.

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PART I

The Theorists of Socialism

Introduction

In this first part of the volume, the authors analyse the contribution of the theorists of socialism, dwelling on both well-known thinkers and less studied ones. In the upcoming essays, intellectuals, journalists and writers, who have shaped to the multifaceted world of European socialism, will help to understand its responses to the Jewish question.

As already noted, the debate developed of the beginning of the socialist movement and immediately drew in its many souls. In the first half of the nineteenth century, in France, Charles Fourier and Alphonse de Toussenel popularised antisemitism among the working classes (Silberner 1946: 245–266, Silberner 1947: 339–362, Mosse 1992: 165–167). Toussenel integrated the medieval origin image of the Jewish usurers with that of the financiers dominating the world with their wealth. He was a severe critic of the French Revolution and visualised a society based on the right to work and on national solidarity. As a matter of fact, his position was neither representative of European socialism nor of French one, as Alberto Scigliano shows in this volume on the Saint-Simonian school. Within the political movement established by Henri de Saint-Simon, Jewish culture and traditions were exalted as seen as intrinsically socialist, especially after the death of the founder in 1825. In a perspective that was at the antipodes of what Fourier and Toussenel argued, for the Saint-Simonians communitarianism and cosmopolitanism were central aspects in their projects of social, economic and spiritual renovation. Therefore, already in the early beginnings of socialism, the analysis of the Jewish question was

weaved together with that of the significance of the French Revolution, the future of the proletariat and, above all, of the nature of the national State, as it is evident in young Karl Marx, influenced by the debate in the Hegelian Left.

In 1844 Marx wrote his famous pamphlet *On the Jewish Question* as an answer to Hegelian philosopher Bruno Bauer, who was convinced that only by overcoming religious identities, social equality could be achieved. In the essay, Marx severely criticised the liberal State. Long before writing *The Capital*, the German philosopher thought that political freedom, ensured by the bourgeois State born out of the French Revolution, was not the same thing as the freedom of humanity (Bauer Marx 2009: 173–206). This was evident in the United States, where pluralism of religious confessions and political equality cohabited with indisputable social imbalances. Thus, Marx questioned not someone's right to their religion, but the idea of the "individual" itself, that diminished social actors to bourgeois individualism, reducing them to just caring for their own needs, and alienating them to their own particularism. The Jews, in this vision of the world, were the maximum expression of alienated particularism.

In the second part of the *pamphlet*, Marx shifted the discussion from the liberal State to the Jews themselves. If Fourier and Toussenel had assimilated the Jews to financial capitalism, Marx identified them with capitalism *tout court*, describing them as a selfish people enslaved to money, and the embodiment of something that was necessary to overcome. Influenced by the idea of religion as a factor of the alienation of man proposed by Ludwig Feuerbach and Moses Hess, Marx claimed that humanity's freedom would only be possible when society self-emancipated from Judaism (Silberner 1949, Arendt 2004: 67, Mishrai 1972: 22, Carlebach 1978, Kovel 1983, Bravo 1986: 869–899, Fischman 1989: 755–775, Kaplan 1990, Traverso 1990: 35–38, Fischman 1991, Mosse 1992: 167–168, Avineri 1997: 402–409, Trincia 2000: 72–105, Dreyfus 2009: 35–38, Mendes 2014: 39–41). However, in his essay he did not offer neither a sociological analysis on the Jewish condition nor a historiographical reconstruction of Judaism, limiting his analysis to the ideas that were popular at the time. If in the first part, discussing the relationship between religions and the politics of modern nations, Marx harshly criticised the liberal State, in the second he echoed antisemitic prejudices of Christian origin that circulated in Europe in the 1840s, and that he clearly did not perceive as incompatible with his analysis on the State. Never racist, but rather well disposed towards the complete assimilation of the Jews,

Marx was however capable of using an openly antisemitic language in his analysis.

Marx's ideas on the Jewish question reached far beyond the borders of the Prussian State, marking the history of the Left all over the world, not only because his *pamphlet* circulated in workers associations and circles, where Hegel and Feuerbach might not be well known or understood but everyone knew the Jewish people were, but also because, like many authors have noticed, Marxists never moved away substantially from his ideas. From the inception of socialism, influenced as they had been by positivism and evolutionary determinism, Marxists thought that the socialist revolution would lead to the extinction of antisemitism and the assimilation of the Jews. No disagreements survive among scholars about this.

Karl Kautsky, for many years the leading orthodox Marxist theoretician, declared in the 1880s that antisemitism was an expression of backwardness and a cultural leftover that was destined to disappear (Mosse 1971b: 19–21, Mosse 1971c: 17–52, Wistrich 1979: 1, Finzi 1981: 897–936, Jacobs 1985: 400–430, Birnbaum 1987: 157–170, Jacobs 1992, Birnbaum 1988: 18, Traverso 1990: 104–109, Mendes 2014: 54–57). He followed the Enlightenment-old argument that the Jews were an unemancipated people and while Marx believed that with the end of capitalism Judaism would also vanish, Kautsky thought that the revolution was still far away, and that the Jewish people would have to be helped to overcome their minority status. As Jacobs noted: "It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that an entire generation of socialists around the world were taught Marx through Kautsky" (Jacobs 1985). Actually, this conception was popular among European socialists, as demonstrated by August Babel's remarks in Cologne at the 1893 German Social-Democratic Convention. Referring to the many critics of capitalism, and especially to the French socialists, Bebel declared that antisemitism was "a socialism for imbeciles", a naïve and superficial notion, and a backward ideology produced by a culture overrun by modernity. In line with this, German Social-Democracy, the largest socialist party in Europe, was in favour of assimilation, supporting the idea that Jews should be fully integrated in the nation States, and opposing Theodor Herzl, the founder of Zionism, whose plans undermined the unity of the workers movements, and the creation of a Jewish State. Convinced to be the true heirs of the French revolution, European socialists embraced the principles of the Enlightenment and deemed Judaism and Jewishness as a social anomaly that would vanish in the next phase of history.

This was also the position of Italian socialists, who at the turn of the century were considerably influenced by German socialism (Tarquini 2019: 27–55). Cesare Lombroso himself adopted this perspective, as shown by Xavier Tabet in his essay on the internationally renowned scientist, who had joined the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) in 1894 on the eve of the Dreyfus Affair, and in the same year published *Antisemitism and Modern Science*. As other European socialists, Lombroso thought of antisemitism as an ancient malady that could take up new forms and infest the continent. For him, it had a medieval origin matter as well as a modern issue, because of the ruling classes that were fostering it among the masses to divide the proletariat. A believer in the importance of mixing races, and of the integration of minorities into national states, Lombroso claimed that where antisemitism is stronger, Jewish communities are more resistant to abandon old traditions. However, with the arrival of a new world order, in which humanity would live together under Christian socialism, the Jewish identity would disappear. From this point of view, Lombroso's conclusions were very different from those of an intellectual that he admired: anarchist and polemicist Bernard Lazare, author of the 1894 book *Antisemitism and its History and Causes*, analysed in this volume by Stefania Mazzone. Lazare was one of the first writers to speak of antisemitism as a movement that, despite the emancipatory laws, was seriously spreading not only in France, but also in other European countries. Mazzone traces Lazare's intellectual trajectory, from his theoretical and practical commitment to fight antisemitism, to his role in the Dreyfus Affair, and his connections with many influential end-of-the-century socialists and Zionists, with whom he would later severe ties. Persuaded that antisemitism was a matter of class, Lazare, like his socialist contemporaries, considered assimilation a solution to the Jewish issue.

Therefore, confronted by the atrocious antisemitic waves that characterised Tsarist Empire and Europe at the end of the nineteenth century, the socialists inquired on the nature of this phenomenon and on how to fight it. Like the papers in this volume show, alongside the majority of socialist voices that argued the above, in the late nineteenth century some authors shifted their viewpoint. Several intellectuals and politicians with a socialist background developed ambivalent ideas, when not openly antisemitic. In his essay, Didier Musiedlak has reconstructed the key moments of the intellectual biography of Wilhelm Marr, a socialist, anarchist, and radical journalist who had been influenced by Proudhon. He was the founder of the antisemitic League in 1879, and is famous for having

invented the term antisemitism. In reality in his paper, Musiedlak shows how this claim is false, as the word was most likely coined by Marr's entourage in Berlin, and explains how for such leftist Judeophobes, the exclusion of the Jewish community was a necessary precondition for a redemption of humanity. Marr's trajectory is representative of a generation of left-wing intellectuals who conceived an array of ideas, representations, and myths that reached beyond the left. In this respect, the most significant case is without a doubt that of George Sorel, explored in this volume by Luca Basile. As it is well known, the founder of revolutionary syndicalism took a radical antisemitic stance after the Dreyfus Affair, arguing that the matter had caused the dismay of the European proletariat. From that moment began a new phase of Sorel's intellectual path in which his criticism of democracy took on reactionary, antisemitic and nationalist motifs. This antisemitism was not the same as that of the French utopian socialists that saw Jewish people as the emblem of capitalism. For Sorel, the defence of Jewish people was one of the intellectual symptoms of the gradual degeneration of bourgeois society and of the betrayal of the French Socialist Party, with its reformism.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, these beliefs were widespread in Italy, as Enrico Serventi Longhi presents in his essay. In it, he investigates the influence of French revolutionary syndicalism on the Italian leaders of that same movement. According to them, just as for Sorel, the Dreyfus Affair had been the triumph of the ruling classes, that had been possible through the subordination of the proletariat, which would only later understand the need to separate from the bourgeoisie. Serventi Longhi underlines how this type of antisemitism gained traction until the beginning of the First World War, involving figures such as Agostino Lanzillo, Alceste De Ambris, and Paolo Orano, who popularised the anthropological and racial stereotypes and grew antisemitic long before embracing nationalism and Fascism.

To sum up, it can be highlighted that in Europe, at the start of the twentieth century, at least two ideological stances existed in regard to the Jewish question: one was embodied by Sorel and his followers, while the other can be traced back to the Second International. From the 1890s until the First World War, the overwhelming majority of socialist intellectuals, parties, and movements recognised in the International their ideological and political leadership, being therefore supporters of assimilation and anti-Zionists. They wished for the Jews to join the workers in the socialist parties to fight alongside the great battle for a class-less society.

For what concerns antisemitism, the European socialists saw it as a leftover of ancient times, a barbaric form of cultural regression used by the ruling classes to divert the proletariat from its true objectives. These ideas circulated unaltered for a long time.

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Religion et Politique: Saint-Simonians, Jews and the Jewish Paradigm

Alberto Scigliano

Introduction

This contribution offers a reflection on the use of Jewish paradigms in the Saint-Simonian school. The political movement of Count Saint-Simon united a number of European socialistic movements of the nineteenth century. In the cultural fervour that this essay is going to discuss, Jewish sources, and their political divulgence, constituted a dynamic and ecstatic push further encouraged by the readings of authors like romantic writer Josef Wroński, or Jewish scholar Joseph Salvador. Even before the school's decline, due, among other things, to a turn towards a bizarre and questionable mysticism, Saint-Simonianism had showed a strong interest in religious issues and religious renewal. The school in itself was a sort of informal creed, whose fluid structure implied the rejection of mainstream

I am going to further develop the topic of this essay in my book on the Israelite paradigm in European culture of the nineteenth century.

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social values, the construction of a new society based on novel economic and social approaches, and the development of a new, ethical Christianity that, first and foremost, questioned the Catholic Church.

In order to explain this peculiar new Christian facet of Saint-Simonianism, we ought to remember that its utopian socialism was influenced by the rising notion of a biblical Grand Narrative. As a consequence, Saint-Simonians' reinterpretation of Judaism as an apparatus relying on ethical and political models was central to their conception of religion in the society to come. In fact, some of the most passionate acolytes of Saint-Simon's thought were also exegetes-like figures that approached the Old Testament with substantial confidence, or with self-proclaimed historical afflatus. They saw in Mosaic institutions a communitarian and civic stance, while also firmly advocating in favour of Christian ethics. Thus, they attempted to combine Christianity and Judaism for the amelioration of humankind. To explore these themes, I will look first at Jewish scholarship from nineteenth century's France, intended as a frame of reference for the newly emancipated Jewish consciousness, and secondly, at the protagonists of this debate as case-studies to investigate a complex environment in which the line between politics and "civic" messianism is not always well defined. My intent is to delineate, however briefly, one of the most fascinating aspects of a school of thought that historiography has reduced to a naive early socialist attempt.

A Preliminary Observation

In an essay appeared in the *Revue Encyclopédique*, socialist philosopher Pierre Leroux appealed for a synthesis between *Christianisme* and *Philosophie*.[1] He was one of several voices from a vibrant generation that lived and worked mainly in Paris, and that considered itself the bearer of true political universalism, while striving for a Hegelian synthesis, in line with their romantic inspirations (Bakunin 1976).

While Paris was the centre of French radical culture and politics, many of its intellectuals were French Jews born between the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, and who were participating to that emancipation process that led to the lifting of legal, social and political restrictions for Jews. As a consequence, emancipated Jews considered themselves the

[1] Leroux, Pierre. 1832. De la philosophie et du Christianism. Réponse à quelques critiques. *Revue Encyclopédique*, August: 284.

heirs of the French Revolution's tolerant instances, being finally released from the burden of discrimination and ready to enter the political and social life of the French nation.

This unconstrained cohort of the new Jewish citizens, despite being still aware of the traditions of the *Ancien Régime*'s Jewish communities, was the first generation hoping to enjoy the outcome of emancipatory process. Even though their expectations were not always well placed, the young French Jews, between mistrust and identity crisis, represented one of the earliest examples of Jewish emancipation in Europe (Badinter 1989).

The Saint-Simonian movement, one of the most notable left-winged political groups in nineteenth-century France, aimed to reform society through social systems based on the improvement of living conditions, the collective ownership of means of production and, of course, the abolition of private property (Picon 2002).

Much has already been written about the history of the Saint-Simonian movement, so for the purpose of this paper, I shall only briefly mention how its philosophy developed in two distinct stages. The first one corresponds with Saint-Simon and his works (1803–1825), while the second one was characterised by the progressive sacralisation and sectarian radicalisation of the founder's original thought (around 1825–1832).

The debate on Saint-Simonianism has often identified in the movement a precursor of managerial capitalism (Soliani 2009) or even as a long arm of Bentham's Utilitarianism (Bellet 2009). Yet, Saint-Simon's school is typically understood in the context of utopian and romantic socialism that arose in the first half of the nineteenth century. In 1871 Arthur John Booth, in his *Saint-Simon and Saint-Simonism*, inserted Saint-Simonianism into the history of socialism (Booth 1871). This definition is an apt one, if we think of the movement before the mystical and bizarre turn of Barthélemy Prosper Enfantin, which led it to become more like a worship of unlikely ascetics, rather than a school of economic and social thought.

Saint-Simonianism moved towards more socialist positions when thinkers like philosopher Pierre Leroux and Amand Bazard, the creator of the secret society *Charbonnerie*, joined. The heterogeneous nature of the movement is especially remarkable in the light of France's ideological context at the time, as the country had abandoned the Napoleonic inebriation, and was heading towards the barricades of the Paris *Commune*.

However, original economic ambitions were partially eclipsed with the transformation of the movement into a creed, and the tension between this new mystical and obscure outlook never reconciled with the refusal to

subjugate to the previous ideological limitations[2] (Picon 2003). This tension was very tangible, since the very first Saint-Simonians had as their top doctrinal priority the elimination of individualism and the development of a unitary and coherent society, whereas the guidance of "Father" Enfantin focused on uncanny and esoteric aspects. Nonetheless, Saint-Simonianism had always manifested a peculiar interest in religious issues, and in particular in Jewish thought and scholarship, as I will discuss in the next section.

Saint-Simonians and Jewish Scholarship in the Nineteenth Century

After the death of Saint-Simon (1760–1825), the original socialist movement, now under the control of "Father" Enfantin, turned into a mystical and for some aspects authoritarian sect, distorting many of the initial principles of its founder. However, many Saint-Simonians, especially those with the most solid religious backgrounds, referred as much to the founder and his *Le nouveau Christianisme* (1825) as to the thinkers of Catholic traditionalism such as Ballanche, Lamennais and Bonald.

Many of the members of the movement were Jews (Szajkowski 1947), thus Saint-Simonianism not only interfaced with many Jews but even the use of Judaism as a paradigmatic political discourse aimed at supporting and amending the theories of the original founder.

Members of the young Jewish-born bourgeois that joined the movement included historian Léon Halévy, mathematician Olinde Rodrigues and his brother Eugéne, and bankers Émile and Isaac Pereire. All of them attended the *salon* of the enthusiastic Baron Gustave d'Eichthal. D'Eichthal was the great-grandson of Berr Isaac Berr, who had been the Jewish delegate to the Assembly of 1789, and a member of Napoleon Bonaparte's *Grand Sanhedrin*.

Within this circle, dozens of religious readings were circulated and discussed, like, for instance Josef Wroński's influential *Prodrome du Messianisme, Révélation des destinées de l'humanité* (1831), a work that

[2] See the criticism of Grün 1845: 104 "[Saint-Simonianism] was both an overwhelming and a most amusing display. The author died before the show was put on, one producer died during the performance, the remaining producers and all the actors discarded their costumes, slipped into their civilian clothes, went home and behaved as if nothing had happened. It was a spectacle, an interesting spectacle, if somewhat confused towards the finale; a few of the performers overacted—and that was all."

fused messianic aspirations of an absolute and worldwide religiosity with proto-positivist scientific notions (Pitocco 1980, Murawski 2006), or the biblically influenced poems of the bard of Polish independence, Adam Mickiewicz (Masłowski 1992). However, since the early 1830s, books on the Israelite institutions and the Mosaic Law by Jewish scholar Joseph Salvador aroused a huge and sincere interest not only in terms of religiosity, but also for how they treated the normative example of Moses' political action, an issue that was gaining interest.

Salvador, a young scion of a wealthy Christian-Jewish family, concentrated his work on the investigation of the Bible, and in particular to the study of the so-called Jewish moral sources. He identified the ethical aspects of ancient Judaism as the common origin of all religions, and developed his notion of "Mosaism", considered as a syncretic civil and religious spirit originated from Moses' legislative masterpiece. His main purpose was to demonstrate that Moses' regulation was the only one that could be best adapted to the notion of democracy, and to the positive values of the French Revolution (Reinhold 1944, Hyman 1972, Graetz 1972, Sebban 2012, Scigliano 2020). In Salvador's very first book, *Loi de Moïse ou systéme religieux et politique des Hébreux* (1822),[3] Moses was introduced as "the author of that system of public order that is the wisest and simplest ever realised. He was the founder of the first known republic, and the man who, after breaking the chains that constrained his people, strove to develop their intelligence, making them swear over a constitution founded on equal rights (Salvador 1822)".

For Salvador, Mosaism was at the centre of an exemplary past: although not removed from Jewish emancipation, it was fundamentally addressed to Gentiles, gaining its universalism from the idea that Moses founded Israelite institutions without God. Salvador addressed the issue from a civil and civic point of view in order to give a political reading of Jewish institutions and principles beyond the religious, and making them relevant for all. This Salvadorian divinity is greatly influenced by Rousseau's idea of God, that in the *Social Contract* was theorised as an *escamotage*. Mosaic institutions are seen not as founded on religious precepts attributable to

[3] The other treaties of Salvador were: *Histoire des institutions de Moise et du peuple hébreu* (1828); *Jésus-Christ et sa doctrine. Histoire de la naissance de l'Église, de son organization et de ses origines pendant le premier siècle* (1838); *Histoire de la domination romaine en Judée et de la ruine de Jérusalem* (1847) and *Paris, Rome, Jérusalem ou la Question religieuse au XIX siècle* (1860).

dogmas, a pervasive idea in Catholic Christianity, but rather on rationally weighted principles and statutes. Consequently, this Judaism is neither theocratic, as described by Enlightenment *philosophes* like Boulager and Voltaire, nor hierocratic, but based on a sophisticated system of rational laws valid to all.

According to Salvador's idea, the historical-political function of the ancient Israelite people, led by their prophet Moses, was to build a nomocratic republic, that is to say a government based on the power of laws. It was then the responsibility of nineteenth-century nations to recognise this imperishable truth, to pay political honour to the Israelites and, eventually, to help their descendants in their emancipation process. In short, the Old Testament was consulted and thought of as the source of a liberal conception of politics that had in Moses its most prominent reformist political leader.

Moreover, Salvador's books imagined a pedagogical role for the Jews. Their moral force was conceived as the spiritual guide for the political and ethical renewal of humanity, and Mosaism as the glue leading to the reunification of all human beings towards a progress grounded in the return to the purity of Jewish (or Mosaic, in Salvador's words) primal doctrines.

Salvador's favourite sources were primarily rabbinical commentaries, from the *Talmudim* to the *Mishnah*, along with other texts that do not belong to the Jewish tradition, like the Qur'an and the Gospels, Latin authors Strabo and Flavius, and medieval rabbis Maimonides and Nachmanides. With them, reformed theologian Jacques Basnage, *Wissenschaft des Judentums* affiliate and orientalist Salomon Munk, seventeenth-century Hebraists John Selden and Wilhelm Schickard, and French Catholic monk and exegete Augustin Calmet are quoted in his books.

Salvador resumed and updated, with due consideration of time and perspective, both the seventeenth-century authors of the *respublica hebraeorum* treaties, as well as the plethora of commentaries on the Scriptures written throughout the centuries. At the same time, through the assimilation and the remodelling of these traditions, Salvador proposed his own syncretic religious reading, as well as a reversal of a tendency to de-politicise Judaism that was being carried out in those years in both reformed and orthodox Jewish circles (Graetz 1996). Salvador's philosophical vision tried to provide a cultural and intellectual pre-eminence to the Mosaic normative work, not only in accordance with Jewish exegesis, but also in relation to classical tradition, so that in his works, the

Jewish tradition and the new French political thinking amalgamated to rebuild Moses' genius.

Salvador's vision was grounded not only in his romantic and synoptical reading of Jewish circumstances, but also in European classical sources. Moses, as the supreme legislator of the Israelites, had a place among other historical lawgivers, and his archetypical figure justified and corroborated the worth of the Jewish people in the political and utopian debate of nineteenth-century France. For Salvador, this could be the time in which the living, and yet ignored, example of Mosaic tradition could lead to a general amendment of politics and human civilisation.

Gustave d'Eichthal and the Hebraic Paradigm

In this *milieu*, the Jewish Saint-Simonians' main political aspiration was to overcome Jewish particularism in favour of a synthesis that could reconcile socialism and the Jewish tradition. They worked to reformulate the image of Judaism, which they presented not as other to the French nation, but as the vehicle of a message that was French, progressive and universal. The Jewish Saint-Simonians who wanted to communicate their socialist message widely, reassessed it on the rediscovery of the Israelite political example, thus semantically recomposing Judaism, which was moved from a strictly religious field into a political one (Cabanel 2000).

Hellenist and publicist Gustave d'Eichthal (1804–1886), one of the most perfervid acolytes of Henri de Saint-Simon, acknowledged this in his profuse correspondence, reiterating that at the core of the Saint-Simonian revolutionary ferment there were values that Judaism had always upheld. According to d'Eichthal, Judaism was revolutionary in itself because of its historical separation and detachment from other ancient peoples.

In an article published in the popular newspaper *Le Temps*, d'Eichthal, after a praise of Christian symbols, of the Gospels and of their importance, concluded by saying that "with Salvador and Gioberti,[4] once mentors,

[4] Vincenzo Gioberti (1801–1852) was an Italian Liberal Catholicism philosopher, a neo-guelphist leader during the *Risorgimento*, and a clergyman. In his book *Del primato morale e civile degli Italiani* (On the Moral and Civil Primacy of the Italians, 1843), Gioberti takes up some Salvador's theories on the Israelite qualities. According to Gioberti, the new Italy had to be founded on consultative assemblies as well as on the constitution of a confederation of Italian states under the presidency of the Pope. The Italian "primacy" consists thereby of the indissoluble tie between Catholic principles and the Italian national genius. Thanks to this link, Italy excels in every field of culture and action. Again, according to Gioberti, Israel and

now friends, I studied the influence of the laws of Moses and of his people for our civilisation".[5] Once again the problematisation of Judaism and its "secularisation" was solved through the normative apology of Judaism itself. Mosaic legalism was therefore seen as the only message that could bring together Saint-Simonian ideas with the French masses.

The Israelite institutions of Moses—d'Eichthal added in a letter to Saint-Simonian leader *Pére* Barthélemy Enfantin—did not contemplate monarchy or the theocratic absolutism typical of other ancient civilisations, but they nourished social equality. He blamed Saint-Simon himself for not considering the Jews in an appropriate manner, unlike, he thought, Martin Luther had. According to d'Eichthal, Luther realised that "the initiation of the world [derives] from the Jewish people" since "the Law and the Jewish institutions offered a religious, political and moral order superior to that of all other nations".[6] The Jewish political tradition thus became a revolutionary paradigm that could complete Saint-Simonian political aspirations (Ratcliffe 1975).

The figure of d'Eichthal is quite complex. On many occasions he spoke of thinking of himself in multiple ways: a Jew, a Christian and a Saint-Simonian. In a letter to Enfantin, he wrote that, although Saint-Simon's new Christianity was a true illumination for him, in his heart he had the Jewish people and, despite the fact that he converted to Catholicism at a young age, he strongly felt he belonged to the "Jewish race" (Leff 2005).

Even though he praised Christianity, d'Eichthal agreed with Salvador on the importance of the Jewish genius within the economic history of the world. According to him, the Jewish legislation, in addition to preserving order and social justice, had also engendered the modern banking system. And, being himself the son of a banker, he thought of the banking system not as an instrument of oppression and exploitation, but as a source of harmony for the nations.[7]

In an unpublished novel he wrote during those years, d'Eichthal reflected that "The people of God, who received the Revelation before Jesus appeared […] [have] always warned that the Christian doctrine,

Italy also represent two matching primates, one purely national and one essentially intellectual, cfr.: Sofia 2004.

[5] *Le Temps*, 1863: May 15.

[6] Gustave d'Eichthal, *lettre au Pére sur les juifs*, January 25, 1838, Bibliothèque Thiers, Fonds d'Eichthal, Ms. Cart. IV, Q-3, ff. 2r–3r.

[7] Ibid., pp. 15–16.

founded by the fathers of the Church, was incomplete. [The Jews] have always affirmed that another great epoch would come, an era that they call messianic, in which the religious doctrine will be presented in the most universal way, holding both temporal and spiritual power, so that all the human beings will have one religion and one organisation".[8]

The convergence between the Salvadorian idea of Mosaic universalism and the unpublished manuscript by d'Eichthal is rather manifest. And it should be also noted that the "single religion" and the "single organisation" that will come would not only have to be modelled on the Jewish case, but the Jews would have to approve of it.

It is important to remember that Joseph Salvador was a regular guest at d'Eichthal's house. The Baron emphasised his own Jewish heritage in the same way Salvador did, and from whom he had absorbed the argument on the historical significance of the Israelite institutions.

The very notion of Mosaism as a unifying force is clearly evident from a later letter, in all probability from the mid-1830s, in which d'Eichthal claimed: "amongst all peoples […] there is one greater than all […]. The cosmopolitan people, chosen by God as the eternal organ of his Revelation […] if the world should, one radiant day, reflect the unity of God in his own unity […] his religious mentor will be the People of God".[9]

According to d'Eichthal, Christianity was not founded by Jesus, but rather it was the product of speculations attributable to the early fathers of the Church, who transgressed the genuinely Jewish message of Jesus.

During all his life, the Saint-Simonian recommended his friends to read Salvador's books, praising not only the intellectual depth of the author, but also the accuracy of his conclusions, and the undeniable connection between the ideas expressed in the debate on the Mosaic Law and the principles of Saint-Simonianism.[10] We can observe significant traces of this incessant re-proposal in the correspondence d'Eichthal had with British liberal philosopher John Stuart Mill (Hainds 1946), published

[8] Gustave d'Eichthal, *La Juive*, second version, Bibliothéque de l'Asenal, Papiers d'Eichthal, Ms. 14390 note et pensée diverses, f. 5.

[9] Letter of d'Eichthal to an anonymous recipient, no date, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Papiers d'Eichthal, Ms. 14393, ff. 3–5.

[10] Letter of d'Eichthal to Pére Enfantin, 2 September 1841, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Papiers d'Eichthal, Ms. 14407, f. 31 but see also the letter of d'Eichthal to M. Freslon [André Freslon, lawyer in Angers] "en réponse à cette question: qu'est devenu le st. simonisme?", no date, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Papiers d'Eichthal, Ms. 14389.

posthumously by his son Eugène d'Eichthal in 1898 (D'Eichthal 1898). In several letters to the British philosopher, d'Eichthal suggested that he read and meditate on Salvador's words, although Stuart Mill's answers suggest that, for his part, Salvador was not much more than a skilled (and interesting) exegete.

Léon Halévy and the Israelite Legal System

Obviously, d'Eichthal was not the only Saint-Simonian to use the Israelite paradigm extensively. As already mentioned, many other Saint-Simonians of Jewish origin tried to re-read Judaism with a political and socialist perspective.

Historian Léon Halévy (1802–1883), one of the first devotees of Henri de Saint-Simon's thought, became a shareholder of the Saint-Simonian newspaper *Le Producteur*, founded by his fellows Olinde Rodrigues and *Père* Enfantin.

The interpretation of Halévy's Jewish history was also largely influenced by Salvador's Mosaism (Ratcliffe 2006), especially in regard to the Israelite legal system, intended as the matrix for any future good normative governance (Leff 2006). If, on the one hand, the centrality of Moses in Halévy's arguments was in contrast with the ideas of Saint-Simon himself, on the other it appeared extremely close to Salvador's thought (Rodrigue 1998).

In his treatise *Resumé des Juifs modernes* (1825) Halévy exemplified this kind of paradigmatic use of Judaism. He presented a philanthropic view of the Mosaic Law, which he considered a gift that the Jews had given to the world while waiting for the new socialist age. In this case, the eventual socialist era was intended as a renewal of that ancient order originated by Moses through his political institutions, while remaining irreducibly modern. The government of Israel, as constituted by its lawgiver, is described as a democratic republic in which Judaism, or Mosaism, is a vector of political ideas that could be reused in France during the bourgeois turmoils of 1830 and 1848.

Halévy envisages Mosaic thought as a system halfway between Saint-Simon and Salvador: the Jews are the pivot of the future society, and of a new syncretistic religion to come, not because of the fact that they are

Jews, but by virtue of being heirs of that biological genius that had given history strong elements of development and progress. Chateaubriand, De Maistre and Lamennais did not agree on this point.[11] Furthermore, Halévy wrote that the Jews had survived fanaticism and violence because of their remarkable intrinsic sense of civilisation, cohesion, national ethics, and love for their own and others' freedom (Halévy 1828).

Jews shared a "universalism and that spirit of the future that presides over [their] destiny", and Halévy believed that it was somewhat implausible that modern Jews might want to "return to live in the land of Jerusalem" because of their universalistic mission.

This use of the Jewish paradigm is definitely a romantic utilisation of Judaism. By imagining Judaism from a progressive point of view, Saint-Simonians placed themselves in the biblical Grand Narrative of the nineteenth century (Ilany 2015). They contributed to the construction of a political discourse based on the exemplarity of Israel during an historical time characterised by the Jewish emancipation and the antisemitic Dreyfus affair. These authors tried to demonstrate that political concepts such as republicanism, democracy, or constitutionalism have their roots in the Mosaic spirit, in opposition to the orthodox and halakhic tradition of the previous Jewish generation. The Saint-Simonians' interest in ancient Israel did not concern religious rules, but concentrated instead on the political, and in particular on socialist ideas like freedom, rationality and prudence, which clashed with superstition and tyranny. In the debate between radical thinkers and ultraconservatives, the Israelite tradition was thus used almost only for political purposes. In a sense, Salvador and Saint-Simonians revised the image of Judaism as a modern political force that would find its employment in the new age to come.

The story of the ancient Israelites was exemplary in terms of the path that humanity ought to take, because it contained the three types of "modern" and "progressive" characteristics that mattered to the Saint-Simonians: the economic, the political and the messianic. Thus, Israel

[11] In particular, Lamennais' ideas on Jews and Judaism are notorious: in fact Lamennais postulated the total anonymity and historical inconsistency of Jews. He also rejected every validity of the Mosaic Law since with Jesus it had been superseded and archived, Lamennais 1817: 32–43.

could be the apostle of humanity, capable of widening its mission in the forthcoming social era.

The Last Saint-Simonian Fellow

Isaac Pereire (1806–1880), former Saint-Simonian and financier, also discussed the progressive and universalistic mission of Judaism. He praised Israelite norms, claiming that they might be the only ones from ancient civilisations that might be accepted in the modern world. According to him, such norms gave a people in constant difficulty a political, economic and moral distinction, which was to be admired as proof of superiority and social cohesion.

In order to explain his views, Pereire composed a short book, *La question religieuse* (1878), a late *manifesto* of religious Saint-Simonianism. The treatise was aimed largely at the Church, accused of being unable to fulfil its historical task, which Pereire urged to return to its origins, helping people through their suffering. The criticism of a sclerotic and effete Church, incapable of carrying out its mission, was a very frequent radical censure in the most rationalist and anticlerical contexts. However, according to Pereire, an innovative solution would have been the re-proposal of the Mosaic model which, in terms of justice and perfection, would be the Kingdom of Heaven transposed on Earth (Pereire 1878: 65–74).

Pereire stated that he wanted to talk "of the Jewish people, whose religion has been translated into law and, under this relationship, was superior to Christianity as a political institution" (Pereire 1878). Yet, whilst he was praising the legal history of the ancient Israelites in 1878, in 1831 he wrote in a fictitious letter to a Jewish woman that "I hope it is easy for me to make you observe this religion [modern Judaism] in a totally different light. You will therefore understand that, although at that time it was a colossal work, when Moses gave it to the Jews, it can no longer offer happiness to men. And you will be struck by the innumerable contradictions in which the Jews are forced to fall to maintain a futile link between the beliefs of their fathers and the needs of this present".[12] Such consideration was obviously greatly influenced by Saint-Simon, who believed in the definitive and syncretistic overcoming of all modern religions.

In conclusion, it seems clear that the Saint-Simonian synthesis is in fact devoid of any pre-codified theology, especially in relation to Christianity.

[12] Pereire, Isaac. 1831. Lettre à une juive. *L'Organisateur*, March 26: 249.

The aptitude for synthesis and continuity both with Judaism and Christianity made the Jewish Saint-Simonians eclectic characters within an eclectic movement. They saw the Jewish paradigm, and the moral continuity of Christianity with Judaism, as the meeting and starting point of the religious future of humanity, thanks to the encounter of Jewish political tradition and Christian morality.

The questions that Jewish Saint-Simonians asked themselves and their confreres concerned the perpetuity of the Mosaic Law and, above all, whether it was capable of renewing Christianity and reaching the future socialist society. These authors emphasised the historical inability of either modern Christianity or rabbinical Judaism to reach the Saint-Simonian objective of human unity. However, I would say that this paradigmatic use of Judaism does not contemplate a total return to the Jewish, Mosaic or Hebraic experience. The discussion concentrated on the inherent moral and normative values of Judaism as well as on the "genius" of the Jewish people. At the same time, biblical religions were rethought using a progressive sensibility with a prophetic, if not even millenarian, character in conformity with the original vision of Henri de Saint-Simon, albeit never according to a purist and absolute claim to Jewishness.

The Jewish paradigm is then crucial because it realises Christianity without replacing it. It performs this mission by returning it to its origin stemming out of the very words of Jesus, who said he did not want to change humanity, but improve it. The moral palingenesis that started with Jesus cannot be completed only through the caesarean power and authority of the Popes, nor with just rabbinical observance. It must be first mitigated by the return to Mosaic moral sources, which in the past had already revealed their modern and emancipatory nature.

A quotation by Jewish socialist Alexandre Weill (1811–1889) perhaps may be used to simplify the peculiarity of the Saint-Simonian Jews: "There will be no more Jews, Catholics, Protestants […]. From this moment on, as Isaiah said, there will be only one God and one people".[13] Therefore, the Jewish paradigm used by the Saint-Simonians is first and foremost a political sentiment, rather than a religious belief. Such sentiment, unchained from sectorial theology, paves the way for a model that, they hoped, could shape the political and religious synthesis of the future.

[13] Weill, Alexandre. 1847. Critique littéraire. *La Démocratie Pacifique*, March 17.

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Cesare Lombroso, the «Blast of Antisemitism» and «Socialist Neo-Christianity»

Xavier Tabet

Although long alienated from the religion of my ancestors, I never lost a feeling of solidarity with my people and I see with satisfaction that you call yourself a student of a man of my race—the great Lombroso.
—Freud, letter to Morselli, February 18th 1926

The Jews

This chapter discusses antisemitism in the works of positivist scientist and father of criminal anthropology Cesare Lombroso (1835–1909), and in the writing of authors close to him who took part in what has been defined the «Lombroso system» (Dolza 1990: 89). While the matter has been partly studied in several articles and works, I will highlight certain aspects of the connection between the Lombrosian conception of socialism and his analysis of antisemitism.[1] The chronological link between the birth of

[1] I also wish to thank Alessandra Tarquini for letting me read the chapter dedicated to Lombroso in her forthcoming work on the relationship between antisemitism.

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socialism and the emergence of «modern» antisemitism was emphasised, in fact, by Lombroso's principal disciple Enrico Ferri (1856–1929), when he remarked in 1893 that antisemitism represented a «form of social psychopathology, which over a short number of years had turned to violence that has no comparable occurrences within the contemporary world, but for the exception of the progress of Socialism» (Pavan 2009: 53). Like Lombroso, Ferri joined the Socialist Party of Italian Workers in 1893, the same year it was funded. In 1894, on the eve of the Dreyfus Affair, Lombroso published an analysis of the causes and nature of antisemitism, entitled *Antisemitism and Modern Science*, and that was translated into French in 1899 (Lombroso 1894, 1899).

Lombroso's book on antisemitism is less known than his other works, like *The Criminal Man, The Man of Genius* or *The Criminal Woman, the Prostitute and the Normal Woman*, to name the three most renowned works within the protean *oeuvre* of the Italian scientist. According to his daughter Gina Lombroso (1872–1944), the book «did not have much importance nor repercussions» (Lombroso 1915: 325). Nevertheless, it marked an expansion of Lombroso's interest in collective phenomena, an interest that would characterise the last years of his life. Moreover, *Antisemitism and Modern Science* remains to this date the most important contribution on the theme in pre-First World War Italy.[2] It allowed acknowledgment of the fact that antisemitism, at the end of the nineteenth century, was an Italian issue. This resonates with the latest developments of Italian historiography (whose numerous contributions cannot be mentioned here), which have led to partially question the renowned thesis expressed in the early 1930s by Arnaldo Momigliano (1908–1987) in regard to Italians' and Jews' "parallel nationalisation". National unification, as even Antonio Gramsci believed, was supposedly the reason for the lack of antisemitism in Italy (Gramsci 1949: 166–168).

Before discussing the book—and the particular ambiguity of Lombroso's analysis of antisemitism—it should be remembered that Lombroso was a Jew himself, in a country where Jews were a socially integrated bourgeois with little knowledge of Jewish tradition and culture, and who had partly lost touch with their own Jewishness (Toscano 2003, 2008). Yet, in the early 1890s, during a «stage of intensification and decisive development of

[2] In the *Origins of Totalitarianism*, Lombroso's book is one of the very few Italian references; it is mentioned by Hannah Arendt, who refers to the French translation, as «Cesare Lombroso's famous work».

political antisemitism» (Bidussa Levis Sullam, 2005: 76), it was not merely as an anthropologist, but also as a Jew, that Lombroso perceived what he called «a freezing blast, of savage hatred sweeping among even the most civil peoples of Europe […], the blast of antisemitism» (Lombroso 1894: 9). At the time, brutal pogroms were occurring in Eastern Europe, resulting in a flow of migrants to Western Europe and America, transforming the Jewish people's perception of their own condition. Shortly afterwards, the Dreyfus Affair (1894–1906) would represent, even for Italian Jews, the first difficult moment after the hopes induced by emancipation (Catalan 2003, 2010).

It should also be remembered that the question of the Jewish race, at the time of the publication of *Antisemitism and Modern Science*, had already been addressed in Lombroso's works. In fact, part of the analyses contained in the book had been previously formulated elsewhere. In his first study entirely dedicated to the Jews, *On the Mortality of Jews in Verona in the 1855–1864 Decade* (1867), the scientist claimed that the anthropological identity of Jews and Gentiles was the same. Contrary to those theories establishing Jews' biological difference, Lombroso argued that their diversity, which was bound to disappear, was linked to historical and environmental causes. Additionally, considerations on Jews are also to be found in *The White Man and the Man of Colour* (1871), *The Criminal Man* (1876), *Thought and Meteors* (1878), as well as *The Political Crime* (1890).

These analyses were grounded on a «racial grammar» that was common in the nineteenth century, according to which there were superior races (culminating with the white, Aryan race) and inferior races (the coloured races) (Nani 2006, 2009). As for the Semitic peoples, they represented an intermediate phase of an evolution that would eventually lead coloured races to the white race. At the same time, however, Lombroso did believe these races could transform, since all races were subject to a certain «transformability», and there existed no such thing—in Italy or elsewhere—as a pure race: all European nations were a «conglomeration» of «mixed races». Lombroso believed in the importance of mixing races, which he called the «*mistione*», as a civilising factor. In *The White Man and the Man of Colour*, he wrote that Jews were a «Darwinian» race, selected by nature and history, transformed by their struggle for survival, that managed to adapt and resist in extremely harsh circumstances, and thereby to rise. The persecution itself served, «like Darwin would say, as a *selector* of the species», according to an idea that Lombroso would often return to in his writings

on the Jews (Lombroso 1892: 152). Having become much more Aryan than Semitic, the Jews represented an example of a race which, «while retaining the primitive type, ascends to the higher levels of its origin, partly transforming itself». Hence, he wrote on, they «not only surpassed the lower level of their race (…) but at times rose above the Aryans, always as growing equally as them» (Lombroso 2000: 504). The Jews had changed so much they almost disappeared through assimilation to the Aryan race. Paradoxically, the thing that had kept them alive, change, also almost destroyed them through self-denial. Consequently, according to Lombroso, in those countries where they had been persecuted the least, the Jews had also changed the least. However, at the same time, and without seeing the contradiction, Lombroso observed that the Jewish identity tended to disappear wherever assimilation had been allowed, as if it was antisemitism that was keeping it alive. As Lombroso would remark in 1894, in a somewhat Sartrean manner, in a way it was antisemitism that «had created» the Jews, or rather that had kept them in their identity, whereas, if antisemitism ceased to be, they would disappear with secularisation. He claimed in a prophetic tone: «If antisemitism ceased, it would achieve exactly the opposite objective it pursues, unless they exterminated the Jews instead, something that would be impossible in today's Europe, although maybe not in Russia» (Lombroso 1894: 97).

Antisemitism

The term «antisemitism» (coined in 1879 by Wilhelm Marr) does not appear in Lombroso's writings until 1892, in *Genius and Insanity*, where he mentions those «coryphaeuses of antisemitism, who are one of the disgraces of contemporary Germany» (Lombroso 2000: 507). Then again, as previously mentioned, a relevant part of Lombroso's analyses on the Jewish race are present in his works before the publication of *Antisemitism and Modern Science*. The subject of the book was anticipated in two 1893 articles that appeared in the *Revue des Revues* and in the *Neue Freie Presse*, the Viennese liberal newspaper where the founder of Zionism, Theodor Herzl (1860–1904), worked.[3] In his 1894 book, Lombroso identified the

[3] Part of Lombroso's analyses had also been anticipated, the same year, in an article by Enrico Ferri published on 3 September 1893 in the *Nuova Rassegna*.

causes of antisemitism in an ancestral, long-lasting phenomenon caused by the profound and unchangeable expression of human behaviours dating back to the rancour of the Romans against a people that dared resist them. This does not mean that that Lombroso did see that modern antisemitism was a novelty. He grasped the specificities of political and racial turn-of-the-century antisemitism, characterised by nationalism, xenophobia and the encounter with Middle-Ages-old Christian anti-Judaism. In an age of rising nationalisms and imperialisms, where the hatred of the masses was used for political aims, this newly developed loathing represented what Lombroso defined as «reverse internationalism» (Lombroso 1894: 27).

As Lombroso acknowledged, socialism itself contributed to this antisemitism, «partly because to its compliance with popular instincts (an imitation of governments' attitudes), and partly because of the hatred towards the greater wealth of the Jews» (Lombroso 1894: 30).

Political antisemitism was most developed in those countries where religious sentiments were strong and the Jews numerous. However, according to Lombroso, this «epidemic and political» antisemitism was unsurprisingly more developed in those countries where social and political reform movements were vigorous (particularly socialism in Germany, nihilism in Russia, nationalism in Austria). It is nonetheless true that Lombroso conceived socialism as something entirely incompatible with antisemitism, and he solicitously denounced the antisemitic stances of several socialists of his time (Battini 2010). Such stances would diminish in the aftermath of the Dreyfus Affair, while remaining within Catholic culture. This was frequently the case in Italy, where, due to Jewish massive support for the national cause, antisemitism was partly the consequence of some Catholics' anti-secularism and hostility toward the *Risorgimento*.

At the start of the Dreyfus Affair, in Henri Dagan's volume *Inquiry into antisemitism* (1895), Lombroso's analysis of antisemitism emphasised the economic aspect of the phenomenon, in opposition to the thesis of socialist antisemite Edmond Picard, who traced the history of the world back to a clash between two races. Lombroso appeared to agree with Dagan's opinion that antisemitism expressed «conflicting interests» and an entire «arsenal of sceneries» to deceive the masses. The Dreyfus Affair would convince him of the existence in France of a sort of «black peril». His anticlericalism intensified, as did his pessimism about France, a country he called «enslaved to the Druids», and where socialism, because of militarism, stopped at the «epidermis», without influencing society. For

Lombroso, France had lost its «moral hegemony», and had become the enemy of all the developed peoples of Europe, as well as the homeland of antisemitism, militarism and Jesuitism.[4]

Despite these reflections, in *Antisemitism and Modern Science*, as well as in other writings, Lombroso traced the causes of antisemitism to Jews themselves, and certain «defects of the Jews» (which is also the title of the most controversial chapter of the book). These defects, on one hand, would be caused by the phenomenon of «compensation», an important concept within the Lombrosian logic, according to which genius, progress and elevation are closely related to compensatory phenomena. They would explain, for example, the fact that «Jews, who produce a higher quantity of geniuses than other citizens, also produce a far greater number of lunatics».[5] These defects are also due to the permanence of a «Semitic, misoneic core, conservative par excellence» that does not disappear (Lombroso 1903: 131). Among these ancestral defects, there is greed and an aptitude for theft, which, Lombroso claimed in his criminological writings, constituted a specific type of Jewish criminality. He especially criticised Jewish «absurd» rites, such as the «savage practice of circumcision», for which teeth and stone knives were employed «like our cave-dwelling forefathers», and which he called a genuine «hangover from cannibalism» (Lombroso 1894: 15). These psychological and moral faults hopefully would disappear through assimilation and emancipation, even though Lombroso thought there was a «persistence of a negative image, internalised at times even by intellectuals of Jewish origin» (Toscano 2003: 33). This «self-hatred», as Theodor Lessing would define it in the 1930s, revealed how the Jews had internalised prejudices against them.

These writings have induced more than one historian to state that «Jews' depiction appears to be […] highly ambivalent, nearing the

[4] Lombroso, Cesare. 1899. La molla segreta nell'Affaire Dreyfus. *Gazzetta del Popolo*, August, 6. As E. D'Antonio wrote, «in the 'end-of-century crisis', Lombroso appeared as an intellectual siding with democracy. Member of the Socialist Party, he released countless articles on the problems of current political affairs, undertaking an impressive anticlerical and antimilitarist battle» (D'Antonio 2001: 296).

[5] In establishing an increasingly profound connection between Jewishness and mental illnesses, Lombroso belonged, as historian Francesco Germinario has observed, to the «abundant assortment of psychiatrists committed to emphasizing the Jew's particular tendency towards nervous diseases» (Germinario 2011: 176).

antisemitic stereotype» (D'Antonio 2001: 285).[6] As for Lombroso's assimilationist perspective, he was not talking about integration in a society that acknowledges diversity, within a context of shared values, but rather of «the absorption, and eventual extinction and dissolution of minority identities within the majority's» (Finzi 2011: 5). If aimed to establish the equality of Jews, such equality is conceived «without diversity» (Toscano 2003: 24–47).

Socialism and Judaism

Lombroso imagined this «new religion» capable of vanquishing both antisemitic prejudices and those ancient Jewish rites that preserved the Jewish identity. This new religion would be a substitute faith, both scientific and socialist, that he called «Socialist neo-Christianity»:

> The best solution would be if Jews and Christians simultaneously overcame common prejudices and converged in a new religion, which would be neither the Vatican's nor ancient Judaism, that would respect new scientific discoveries, and advocate for new social ideas based on Christ's teachings. It would be a neo-Christianity in which, without shame or constraint, Jews and Christians could reunite, with the former having stripped themselves of ancient and ridiculous rites, and the latter having disengaged from hatred and anti-scientific superstitions (Lombroso 1894: 109).

Lombroso hands to socialism the role of ensuring the formation of a «religion of love capable of dissipating the sanguineous antisemitic fumes». «It would be the first time», concluded Lombroso at the end of his book, «that scientists and the masses shared a common cause» (Lombroso 1894: 10).

Lombroso's affiliation to socialism, part of his late interest for politics, developed when the scientist was seeking for a connection between natural and social laws, and part of a tendency of «turning socialist», that characterised the highly cultured Turin of the 1890s. This particular socialism has been considered by Marxist historiography, not without a certain irony, as a «socialism for professors»,[7] since socialism in Turin was

[6] Roberto Finzi's judgement appears even harsher, claiming that «the image of the Jew evoked in the Lombrosian text […] is full of ambiguities, its folds reveal more than one stereotyped image, shared by a Judeophobe feeling» (Finzi 2011: 77).

[7] Such is the title of the third chapter of Paolo Spriano's work (Spriano 1972).

«simultaneously Deamicisian and Prampolinian».[8] Originally conceived as secular, socialism implied a belief that humankind could evolve towards a more just world, as well as a willingness to aid the working class, without however deeming it the protagonist of its own emancipation. Gina Lombroso herself gave a very nuanced version of the depth of her father's affiliation to socialism, when she claimed that:

> Lombroso, while not agreeing with the socialists maximum programme or class struggle, and not even (…) with many parts of the minimum programme, was not averse to this movement, which, in the midst of universal cynicism, brought a new ideal that, whether good or bad, appeared to have the strength to attract the young in its orbit, stripping them of the petty and small-minded egoism in which they had enveloped themselves (Lombroso 1915: 317).

Even if Lombroso was not interested in political activity per se, his was not a plain and generic sympathy for socialism, and it cost him dearly in terms of divisions within his school. It was in relation to socialism that Enrico Ferri and Raffaele Garofalo (1851–1934) went their separate ways, representing respectively Lombrosianism's sociological and juridical soul, according to a distinction made by Ferri himself. Their debate dealt with the connections between Marx and Darwin, and made waves in socialist culture. Ferri claimed in *Sociology and Positive Science* (1894), that there was a «perfect harmony between Socialism and Darwinism», while Raffaele Garofalo denied such compatibility as he denounced in his volume *The Socialist Superstition* (1895).

Lombroso, who «assuredly did not concern himself with meditating on Marx» (Bulferetti 1975: 381), did not take an explicit position in this debate. His determinism was always, rather than economic, more anatomical and physiological. In general, Lombroso fluctuated rather significantly in terms of his commitments to and conception of political action, having a «rather personal and heterodox view» (Scavino 2009: 124) of socialism. Hence, in the 1890s, he exhorted socialists to ally with the liberals, claiming the need to «make practical Socialism, not the Buddhist kind practiced in Italy» (Lombroso 2000: 886). During the first decade of the century, Lombroso reproached once more, though in an entirely different

[8] As P. Spriano wrote, «positivism and moralism cooperated to transfer the socialist question of class struggle outside of its actual terms» (Spriano 1972: 39–42).

sense, the socialists' excessive timidity, especially in 1905, when he resigned from the position of city councillor in Turin, as reformists agreed to support the Sonnino government. Such reconsiderations characterised the majority of socialists, torn between criticism of representative democracy and the obligation to defend it against reactionary movements. However, Lombroso managed alternately, and sometimes even simultaneously, to be «moderate, gradualist and ultra-legalitarian in principle, while at the same time siding against the reformists after the 'liberal turn' of the early 1900s» (Scavino 2009: 125). However, disenchantment characterised the final years of his life, even in regard to socialism.[9]

Nonetheless, Lombroso's daughter portrayed his adherence to socialism, at least in the beginning, as a new «faith». She recalled her father's remarks as published on *Il Mattino di Napoli* in 1895: «it felt as if I'd returned to the age of the first Christians and could hear the voices of the first believers in the catacombs» (Lombroso 1915: 317). For this unbelieving Jew, who did not feel intensely Jewish—a «Godless Jew», as Freud would define himself—socialism embodied what Arnaldo Momigliano, in his *Jewish Pages* (1987), would call an «alternative faith».[10] Socialism, on the other hand, especially in Italy, had been frequently conceived by Jews as the pursuit of a theoretical and ethical commitment that patriotic ideals already embodied. During the Risorgimento, via the borrowing of substitute values and ways of thinking, a form of «secularisation of their identity and relocation of messianism within patriotic ideals and the social field» had already taken place among the Jews (Sofia 1993: 43).[11]

For Lombroso, the connection between Judaism and socialism appeared to be a sort of «bee in his bonnet» (Cavaglion 1988: 77). Thus, in *Antisemitism and Modern Science*, he depicted a «socialising» portrait of the Jews. Revolutionary and progressive by nature, they admired neither

[9] In 1905, Lombroso published a text on the *Avanti!* entitled «Neo-Franciscans and neo-socialists», dipicting the dangers of socialist degeneration, «similar to that of Franciscans after the death of their founder».

[10] According to Alberto Cavaglion, the transition was «from an ethical universalism deprived of substance by the time […] to a social universalism at times devoid of substance» («*Il socialismo ci renderà felici?*» (Cavaglion 1995: 401).

[11] As Esther Capuzzo wrote: «It was probably with the merging of the cult of the fatherland and the belief in a God open to the highest aspirations of justice that the turning point of Jewish identity's secularisation occurred, as it transfused the religious element in patriotic and social ideals. In the decades following (Italian national) unity, this process was accelerated by the increasingly separatist and secular character of the liberal State» (Capuzzo 2004: 81).

the saints nor the resigned, while applauding the righteous: «Starting from the idea that the good, that is to say justice, must be achieved here and not beyond the grave, they sought justice on earth, but never finding it, they strived to gain it and remained perpetually unsatisfied» (Lombroso 1894: 78). They «gave us Mosaicism (…), Christianity, which, do note, anticipated socialist theories by far; and, finally, Socialism» (Lombroso 1894: 69). He thought Jews were complicit to the mistakes and excesses of capitalism, but subsequently «they were perhaps the first to take a revolutionary initiative against capitalism, with Marx, Loria, Lassalle, and the many others associated with Socialism in every country. Even thought they had done evil, they at least later produced the first remedies» (Lombroso 1894: 91).

At a time when socialism frequently presented itself as a new religion, the idea of a «socialist Jesus» was widespread. The origin of this notion can be traced to Renan, who saw in socialists «unknowing pupils of the prophets». The conception that Judaism was at the origin of the socialist sentiment of justice and revolutionary spirit can be found in the works of Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu (*Israel among the nations*, 1893), and Bernard Lazare (*Antisemitism, its History and Causes*, 1894), fragments of which Lombroso read in newspapers and magazines. However, this «neo-Essene» socialism constituted, as historian Alberto Cavaglion remarked, a variation on the theme of a «socialist Jesus», with the imagining of a «socialist (or prophetic) Jewish Jesus» (Cavaglion 1995: 407). Among socialists, this idea never became too popular, because of the prevailing approach was to treat religion as a «private matter», and maybe because of the circulation of Zionist solicitations that prevented its growth.

Finally, the largest debate within socialism dealt with its relationship with pessimism, constituting one of the most discussed themes in the end-of-century socialist press. The debate opposed those who, like Filippo Turati (1857–1932), believed that «pessimism is the ague for which Socialism is the quinine» and those who considered, like Jewish socialist Felice Momigliano (1866–1924), that being socialist did not preclude the possibility of being a pessimist, contrary to the «socialist Pangloss».

According to Momigliano, a Jewish «melancholy» definitely existed, not as a «metaphysical entity», but as the outcome of subordination to «psychological phenomena», because «Jews bore in their blood the stigma

of the atrocious persecutions suffered by their ancestors».[12] This melancholy represented a form of «optimism-pessimism», which Momigliano defined as a sort of «meliorism».[13] This optimism-pessimism is that of Leopardi's old man, who managed to resist annihilation: «If the Jew resisted all the forces attempting to destroy him, if, like Leopardi's ragged and bloodied old man, he proceeded amidst serpents and thickets in spite of his hands and feet getting covered with blood, he drew that vigour from the optimistic faith encouraging him to resign himself to a happier fate. The existence of the Jews […] attests their optimism».[14]

The Zionist Temptation

Some final observations relative to Lombrosian Zionism will conclude the essay, without however delving into the complex connections between socialism and Zionism for matters of space. During the late 1890s, the proximity to Max Nordau (1849–1923) brought Lombroso closer to Zionism. During his trip to Russia in 1897, the Italian scientist learned of the difficult conditions in which the poor Jews of the East lived. If we are to believe the words of his daughter that «if he did not assent to Zionism, he assented to the need for this ideal movement providing faith and comfort to a scattered race» (Lombroso 1915: 352), the relationship Lombroso had with Zionism was undoubtedly timid. His manifestations of support to Zionism «do not go beyond solidarity […], do not become assumption of responsibilities, Lombroso does not accept specific assignments, he is content with providing his signature to a number of initiatives» (Frigessii 1999, 2003: 326).[15]

[12] Momigliano, Felice. 1897. Migliorismo o pessimismo ebraico. *Critica sociale*, July, 16: 221.

[13] This notion of «meliorism», inspired by Max Nordau's reflections in the chapter called «Optimism or pessimism» of *Psychological Paradoxes* (1896), seems to be the origin of Gramsci's famous maxim according to which the pessimism of intelligence must be combined with the optimism of the will.

[14] Momigliano, Felice. 1897. Migliorismo o pessimismo ebraico. *Critica sociale*, July, 16: 221.

[15] In August 1898, Lombroso wrote to Theodor Herzl, the founder of Zionism, telling him he could not accept participating in the Second Zionist Congress as he was too old for a movement he knew little about. Lombroso asked Herzl to declare to his friends, in his name, that if he had only been thirty years younger, he would have been among «the most passionate partisans» of Zionism.

However, this support did indeed exist, and especially in the very last years of his life, is bordered at times approaching agreement.

More than a project embedded in Jewish traditions and identity, Zionism initially was for Lombroso a means for Jews to break free from persecution and to re-establish their dignity. In his mind, as in that of Felice Momigliano and the majority of Jewish socialists in favour of Zionism, it concerned poor Jews, and first and foremost the ones in the East.[16] The Zionist project then appeared to him, as he wrote in July 1898 in *Die welt*, like «*eine wiege*» (Frigessi 2003: 324), as a cradle or a refuge. It is hard to know if Lombroso was truly aware of the contradictions between Zionism and his own theories of assimilation. Similarly, it is rather difficult to establish to what degree the relationship with Zionism represented for Lombroso, after having faced the issue of antisemitism, a sort of return to his Jewish identity in the final years of his life (D'Antonio 2001: 300). Zionism, in any case, was a response to antisemitism, and coincided with the Jewish people's need to regenerate, or rather give birth, as Nordau put it, to a «new» Jew, healthy and reinvigorated in mind and body.

At the first signs of crisis after the bourgeoning expectations of emancipation, bolstered by the experience, shared by many, of fighting in the *Risorgimento*, Lombroso saw the inner transformations of European Judaism, while perceiving in antisemitism the failure of emancipation. This transformation, which implied a new search for identity, seemed to become inevitable when integration became the victim of the crisis of values and liberal institutions.

Thus, we shall conclude by quoting a rather «Arendtian» statement by Lombroso, who in an interview for an English newspaper claimed: «I am Zionist because I am a Jew, and as a Jew I wouldn't know if it is possible to not be Zionist».[17] A quote reminiscent of Hannah Arendt's famous words: «if one is attacked as a Jew, one must defend oneself as a Jew».

[16] Such was also the idea of Felice Momigliano, who in 1903 claimed that «Jews of the west are wrong in fighting Zionism, which is a necessity for their eastern co-religionists, distressed by the triple plague of absolutism, capital and antisemitism. It is nonetheless true that the issue does not concern them directly […] they do not feel united anymore in communities of beliefs with their co-religionists of the east, they see themselves as contemporaries of Renan, Spencer, Taine» (Frigessi 2003: 325).

[17] Lombroso in the *Bril's telephon* (also reported by the *Corriere israelitico*, 1901). XL: 78.

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Anarchists and Jews: Bernard Lazare's Analysis of Antisemitism

Stefania Mazzone

Introduction

The focus of this essay is on Bernard Lazare as one of the first authors to speak of antisemitism as a movement that, despite the emancipatory laws, was seriously spreading not only in France, but also in other European countries and in North Africa, especially Algeria. The aim of this article is to focus the attention on the role of Lazare as the first Jewish intellectual who was aware of the danger for the Jews, and studied the phenomenon to understand it and contain it. The stress is on the origin and development of the analysis of the issue in young Lazare, to provide a clear indication of how the author himself still needed time to deal with some of the features that antisemitism was assuming, especially outside France.

The first part of the article, *A matter of class*, highlights the political, typically socialist, and anarchist approach with which Lazare addressed the issue of antisemitism in his 1894 work. The text collects interventions published in newspapers and magazines that wanted to bring the theme of antisemitism back to historical objectivity, attributing it substantially to

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the myth of the deicidal people. In the same way it reconstructs the way the author considered, according to the socialist approach, the real problem of secularization of the whole society, without underestimating the revolutionary significance of Judaism.

The second part, *In search for roots*, investigates the Parisian period of Lazare and his reflection around left-wing antisemitism, together with his own antisemitism on the lines of Spinoza, Heine and Marx. It highlights how, through a search for his own cultural roots, Lazare's political approach was configured in continuity with the revolutionary spirit, as we witness a transition from "unsociable Jews" to "the socialist Jews".

Finally, the last part analyses the consequent passage *From the anarchist to the prophet*. Here the definition in Hebrew terms of the cultural setting of Lazare is reconstructed. Against the Talmud of "doctors", Sephardic Lazare recalls the fundamental Jewish figures for European culture, from Montaigne to Goethe. The importance of Lazare's "Spinozist" approach is highlighted, and because of his ideas on seeing the Jewish theme as universal he became known as the "Jew of France".

A Matter of Class

Bernard Lazare is the classic and unsurpassed example of a secularized Jewish intellectual, with anarchist and socialist ideas, who reflected without pretence on the causes of secular antisemitism, like many others would after him. In his book *L'Antisémitisme. Son Histoire et ses Causes*, Lazare collected several papers, appeared in newspapers and magazines, to open a balanced and historically objective debate on the causes of antisemitism. The fundamental error of antisemites consisted in having made the Jews the centre of the world, thus tickling the very vanity of the Jews themselves. This "overvaluation" of Jewish people made up the peculiarity of antisemitism compared to "simple" racism. Certainly, the subject of "deicide", in Lazare's view, greatly contributed to increasing the vision of power and grandeur of the Jews themselves, so that they had become the continuous, powerful, and hidden enemy to be afraid of. It was a question, therefore, of considering the "chosen people" as the rulers of the world, and to take their place.

Hannah Arendt would explain that the invention of an already existing Jewish hegemony formed the basis of the illusion of a future German hegemony. The central question remained the problem of assimilation. Lazare was a supporter, with his anarchist and socialist positions, of a

general secularization of society, and therefore in favour of the secularization of the Jews themselves. However, he considered the problem of antisemitism in terms of class, regarding it a bourgeois opinion that saw rich Christians against rich Jews. This class-based view of antisemitism was confirmed by the *Affaire Dreyfus*, and from that moment on, Lazare began to evaluate the libertarian and socialist value of Jewish culture itself, with the exception, as for Arendt, of Rabbinism. Marx himself, in his positive qualities, turned out to be absolutely Jewish:

> The same is true of Marx. The descendant of a long line of rabbis and teachers he inherited the splendid powers of his ancestors. He had that clear Talmudic mind which does not falter at the petty difficulties of fact. He was a Talmudist devoted to sociology and applying his native power of exegesis to the criticism of economic theory. He was inspired by that ancient Hebraic materialism, which, rejecting as too distant and doubtful the hope of an Eden after death, never ceased to dream of Paradise realized on earth. But Marx was not merely a logician, he was also a rebel, an agitator, an acrid controversialist, and he derived his gift for sarcasm and invective, as Heine did, from his Jewish ancestry (https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/jewish/lazare-anti.asp#PREFACE).

As early as the 1880s, Christian anti-Judaism became antisemitism in France, but it was only in 1894 that Captain Alfred Dreyfus was arrested for treason. As it is widely known, the court case was so severe that whole of French society, culture and politics became involved in the debate about the events. In 1886, Edouard Drumont, the owner of the openly antisemitic newspaper *La Libre Parole*, published *La France Juive*, which was a great success. In 1894, before the *Affaire*, Bernard Lazare published *L'Antisémitisme*, a controversial work that was not very kind to the Jews, as shown by the favourable reception of Drumont himself. However, it was clear that such appreciation was instrumental, as in reality the text is not antisemitic at all. In this sense, Lazare's own declaration, in the preface, is significant:

> I dislike antisemitism; it is a narrow, one-sided view, still I have sought to account for it. It was not born without cause, I have searched for its causes. Whether I have succeeded in discovering them, it is for the reader to decide. An opinion as general as antisemitism, which has flourished in all countries and in all ages, before and after the Christian era, at Alexandria, Rome, and Antiachia, in Arabia, and in Persia, in mediaeval and in modern Europe, in a

> word, in all parts of the world wherever there are or have been Jews such an opinion, it has seemed to me, could not spring from a mere whim or fancy, but must be the effect of deep and serious causes (https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/jewish/lazare-anti.asp#PREFACE).

In Chapter XII, Lazare reflects upon the revolutionary spirit in Judaism, making a fundamental premise that there is no need to talk about Jewish communism. Mosaic institutions, which he judged as inspired by socialist principles, had not always supported the revolutionary spirit of Israel. In his view, the revolutionary spirit did not derive from the principles in which people believed, but from the context in which they lived. It is a will to change the present state of things, whatever the direction. Therefore, in agreement with Renan, he claimed that the Jews "were always an element of progress or transformation", not so much for their institutions, as for having always been "discontented". Proof of this was to be found in prophetism, messianism, but also in Christianity, "supreme result of the continuous agitation of the Jews". Interestingly, in Lazare's view, the spirit of Jewish rebellion was inherent to their very idea of God, as well as to their peculiar notions of life and death. In Jewish religion, life is the most beautiful gift that man could receive, and death the worst evil. There is no paradise, no hell, and no afterlife. Therefore, the only possible happiness is to enjoy life. So a Jew's frustration is in not having their merits recognized, or in being punished for no reason. "The Jewish rebels" did not respond to calamities with the fatalism of the Muslims, or the resignation of the Christians. Again, Lazare refers to Renan for whom "the hatred for injustice is extraordinarily diminished by the certainty of receiving a compensation in the afterlife", therefore for Jewish peoples, to whom only life can give happiness, every injustice was intolerable, in a perspective that Lazare considered strongly "contractual":

> The idea of contract dominated the whole of Jewish theology. When the Israelite fulfilled his duties toward Yahweh, he demanded reciprocity. If he thought himself wronged, if he considered his rights had not been respected, he had no good reason to temporize, for the minute of happiness he lost was a minute stolen from him, one which could never be returned to him. Accordingly, he looked to a punctual fulfillment of mutual obligations; he wanted a correct balance to exist between his God and himself; he kept a strict account of his duties and his rights, this account was part of the religion, and Spinoza could justly say: "With the Jews the religious dogmas did not consist in instructions, but in rights and prescriptions; piety meant jus-

tice, impiety meant injustice and crime" (https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/jewish/lazare-anti.asp#PREFACE).

Certainly, the inherent political nature of Judaism was also the reason for the phobia that arose in France from 1880 onwards, transforming Catholic anti-Judaism into antisemitism. As persecutions mounted in the East, a "Jewish invasion" was feared, even though it was only a few thousand people who arrived between 1870 and 1880 from Alsace Lorraine. Drumont, in this case, claimed in his writings that France had been invaded by 500,000 Jews. Evidently antisemitism represented the search for a scapegoat in a society which, having become industrialized, was undergoing a rural exodus, the exploitation of workers, the impoverishment of the middle classes in favour of banks, and an inhuman economy. Also, from a cultural and philosophical point of view, it was a matter of fighting secularism, the refusal of God, and the devaluation of Christian virtues and Catholic influence. As a result, the most disparate social classes rallied against the Jews, from the nostalgic conservatives of the monarchic order, to the poorest sections of the population, victims of the new republican capitalism. Antisemitism was nourished by a rejection of the rational individualism of the new liberal society, and the consequent capitalism and exploitation, corrupt parliamentarism, and a bourgeois society where values and ties dissolved. In this sense, traditional anti-Judaism offered the scapegoat of "Christ's traitors". This created the hypothesis of a great conspiracy, of which the Jews were be the main authors and beneficiaries, that could provide an overall and coherent explanation for the great social dissolution. In this light, Marx and Rothschild were being interpreted as two sides of the same coin. Since the Jews had no homeland, they were invading others'. The traditional vocation to trade and homelessness were elements of sin, and a perversion. The development of studies, research, rationality, and the control of instinct were also regarded with suspicion, and tolerance was considered cowardly weakness. That is how Barrès considered Dreyfus, guilty of espionage because of his "race", in a vein that later made antisemitism a political project. Or how Charles Maurras thought of antisemitism as "providence" that smoothed out and simplified everything.[1]

[1] Under the pseudonym of Agathon, author of "Les vraies causes de l'antisémitisme", in *Revue encyclopédique*, according to Nelly Wilson (1978), would hide Charles Maurras and not Henri Massis, as had been hypothesized. Wilson remembers how Lazare is seen by

In Search of Roots

When Lazare arrived in Paris, where Drumont's text had been published in 1866, he did not feel Jewish, nor was he particularly interested in the Jewish question, but *La France Juive* had become a case. Drumont's great success led to the re-issuing of two older books: *Les Juifs Rois de l'époque* of Toussenel, first published in 1845 and reprinted in 1886 and *Le Juif, le Judaïsme et la Judaïsation des Peuples Chrétiens* by Gougenot des Mousseaux, first published in 1869 and reprinted in 1886, leading to a return of antisemitism in those left-wing circles that Lazare was attending. His heritage certainly became more relevant because of this, even though he had until then denied it in favour of his freedom of choice. In *Le Fumier de Job*, he would remember this as a difficult period, rediscovering his roots and origins, and engendering his research for the causes of antisemitism. In years of research, Lazare produced an objective and sincere work on the issue, with an open and unprejudiced attitude. First of all, he traced the origin of Jewish antisemitism through the reading of Spinoza, Heine and Marx. Young Lazare's anti-Judaism was the result of many processes, including social assimilation, French patriotism, the attraction to mysticism and esotericism, his political commitment to socialism, and a general ignorance about Jewish tradition. He had surely been influenced by antisemitic Christian literature. For instance, from the works of Gougenot des Mousseau he had learned the distinction between the Bible and the Talmud and, as his own works show, he was deeply influenced by both of them. In April 1890, during a public conference, Lazare elaborated for the first time his idea for "Jews and Israelites", as developed in his article of the same name published in *Les Entretiens* on September 1, 1890. In it, Lazare developed his theory that the ancient Jewish nation was divided into two groups: *géhovistes monothéistes*, that is patriarchs, judges, and prophets, who followed the dictates of the Bible, and the *race detestable*, made up of the followers of Baal and of the golden calf of the Talmud. From that division derived the distinction between Sephardi

Agathon as an antisemite and an Israelite fanatic, even using some expressions of the *Antisemitisme* by Lazare about modern Jews, against Dreyfus. Thus he defines him on *Action française* (newspaper) 15 September 1908 a «Juif antisémite mourut Zionist». And so, the same Maurras will use the figure of Lazare: «Recueils de jugements invraisemblables mais certains sévères mais justes et gênants, mais incontestables d'un Juif Bernard-Lazare sur le juif de tous les lieux et de tous les temps, insociable, anarchiste, cosmopolite, agent révolutionnaire mais conservateur vis-à-vis de lui-même (Maurras 1907: 177).

(Hebrew-Latin, the Israelites) and Askenazite (Hebrew-unnic, the Jews). Evidently, Lazare showed his propensity for the first group.

This distinction allowed him to consider a lineage of descent, and to get closer to Drumont. Indeed, he considered Drumont's work not against French Israelites, but against the Jews, and his own analysis was but a question of terminology: the Israelites would belong to the healthy part of French society, while the rotten and rich part would include the Jews. In terms of class, the honest Israelites were supposedly poor, but obviously that was not the case in France. Lazare defined them averagely wealthy, but not involved in high finance. However, in an article published on *Entretiens* in October 1890 entitled "*La Solidarité Juive*" on the basis of what Drumont had already said against the *alliance israélite universelle*, Lazare himself condemned Jewish solidarity supporting Drumont's antisemitism.

In March 1892, the story of a ritual murder committed in Châtellerault appeared in the *Journal d'Indre-et-Loire*, of which Delahaye, a Bulangist member of Parliament, was chief editor. Later, it was determined that the child had been killed by their mother, but the ancient prejudice persisted. In May, the synagogue where a Rothschild wedding was being celebrated was attacked, and in the same month the anti-capitalist magazine *La Libre Parole* added Jewish army officers to its campaign against finance by naming them. On this occasion, Lazare intervened in favour of the Jewish officers, considering them more patriotic than the French themselves, thus starting to undermine the same terminological distinctions he himself had suggested. In September 1892, the article, "*L'Antisémitisme et Ses causes Générales*", appeared on *Entretiens*. This would become the first chapter of Lazare's most famous work, *L'Antisemitisme, son Histoire et ses Causes*, published in 1894. The article was quite moderate. In his search for the causes of antisemitism, Lazare had begun to recognize that the hatred towards the Jews was not always caused only by the Jews themselves.

The article, "L'Esprit Révolutionnaire dans le Judaïsme", published on *La Revue Bleue* on May 20, 1893, further renewed Lazare's position. That same article, which later became the twelfth chapter of his book, is central to find the origins of the positions that would lead Lazare to approach anarchism and Zionism. For him, the revolutionary spirit of the Jews was to be found in Israel as a community of justice. But the ideal of Israel never became a reality: no prophet brought justice, equality, freedom, nor did the chains melt, the prisons collapse or authority and predators end:

> Notwithstanding their long bondage, despite the years of martyrdom which have been their lot, in spite of the centuries of humiliation, which have debased their character, depressed their brains, cramped their intelligence, changed their tastes, their customs, their aptitudes, the debris of Judah have not abjured their so vivid dream, which had been their support and inspiration during the wars for independence. The funeral-piles, massacres, spoliations, insults, everything contributed to make dearer to them the justice, the equality and the liberty which during many long years were for them the emptiest words. The great voice of the prophets proclaiming that the wicked will be punished one day has always found an echo in these tenacious souls that did not like to bend, and despised this so miserable reality in order to delude themselves with the idea of the future time […]. However gloomy the present, Israel never ceased to believe in the future (https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/jewish/lazare-anti.asp#PREFACE).

On December 23, 1892 Lazare published an article entitled "*Juifs et Antisémites*" on *L'Événement*. On that occasion, the French Jew controversially asked Drumont what the solution proposed by antisemitism was, suggesting himself a few options: from the expulsion of the Jews, to ghettos, deportations, slavery, and forced conversion, he even asked if there was any other solution except the extermination of the Jewish people. However, Lazare's idea at the time was that antisemitism would disappear. He had been growing closer to socialism and secular positions, and believed in the advent of a revolution that would bring together peoples and vanquish religions. This would make antisemitism obsolete. This article was published in the same year he wrote the last part of *Antisémitisme*, which instead defended the revolutionary spirit of Judaism.

This text composed between 1889 and 1894, contains two arguments, according to Wilson's (1978), authoritative interpretation. Firstly, it is a careful study of antisemitism from Greek-Latin antiquity until the end of the nineteenth century. This is a large and well-documented research on the causes of antisemitism, for the first time conducted by a Jew. And secondly, and more importantly, *L'Antisémitisme*, is Lazare's search for his Jewish roots, roots that he would not have otherwise felt he had. The text is divided as follows. The first part (Chapters 1 to 7, written up to 1892) shows Lazare's initial antisemitism. The Introduction, in fact, takes up his article "*The Causes Générales de l'Antisémitisme*" pointing to the direct responsibilities of the Jews. The second part, (Chapters 8 to 15), considered by scholars more modern, was written with a different feeling. The last three chapters are, in fact, edited with notes and references until 1893,

but afterwards the writing becomes faster, and finishes with the promise, in the preface to the 1894 edition, of further in-depth work. Wilson ascribes to this promise the weakness of the second part. The first part of the book offers several documents in favour of the thesis that in the history of civilisation in the Western world the pride of being the "chosen people" had made the Jews "unsocial", arrogant, and exclusionary rulers. In Roman times the Jews were the dark merchants in the shadows, and in the Middle Ages, epitomised in the figure of Shylock, they were usurers. The events of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation are described as imbued with antisemitism, but also with less pressure, with the exception of Luther's ideological invective, given by the displacement of the clash between Catholics and Protestants. The seventh chapter, "*La Littérature Antijudaïque et les Préjugés*" deals with legal and popular anti-Judaism from the eighteenth century to the French Revolution. Lazare's goal was to denounce the ideological and cultural operations that led to antisemitism in modernity. This is made explicit by the use of sources that were not just the anti-Jewish legislation of the Church and monarchies, but also of the scriptural anti-Judaism of theologians, poets, philosophers or historians. Theological anti-Judaism was based on the traditional arguments, while literary anti-Judaism on Schudt and Voltaire, who Lazare refuses to engage with, considering them of low quality and plagiaristic. However, since the seventeenth century, anti-Judaism differed from the past:

> The social side gets gradually the upperhand of the religious side, though this latter continues to exist. The question is asked, not whether the Jews are wrong in being usurers, or merchants, or deicides, but whether, as Schudt says, the Jews ought to be tolerated in a State or not, whether it is lawful to admit Jews into a Christian commonwealth, as John Dury inquires, about 1655, in a pamphlet directed against Cromwell's protege, Menasseh ben Israel. This is the social standpoint which we shall see developing henceforth in literary anti-Judaism; a part of modern antisemitism will rest on the theory of a Christian State and its integrity, and in this wise it will be connected with the ancient anti-Judaism (https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/jewish/lazare-anti.asp#PREFACE).

Very relevant, therefore, is the consideration that Wilson proposes about the second part of *Antisemitism* where the unsociable Jews become the socialist Jews, having the Jewish revolutionary spirit replaced the conservative spirit of Judaism. Even the Talmud and its rabbis seem

rehabilitated, to the point of considering the same spirit of religion as the bearer of a revolutionary message. The most significant fact of this second part of Lazare's work is the attempt to bring together antisemitism and capitalism, in the context of the growing awareness of his political and cultural position in libertarian ideas. The same decline of religions, and in this Lazare is close to Marx, would emancipate the Jews from Judaism.

From Anarchist to Prophet

It is evident that, starting from this approach, Lazare's positions weakened, and he turned from anarchist to self-appointed prophet (Peguy 1910). In this regard, it is interesting to consider the content of the penultimate chapter of his book, *Les Juifs et les Transformations de la Société. Les causes Politiques et Religieuses de l'Antisemitisme*. Here he affirms that the real cause of antisemitism is the revolutionary spirit of the Jews that would lead them to contest and subvert the established orders. In reality, his intent is to suppress the notion of conspiracies that always surrounded Jewish people.

At the same time, Lazare affirmed with force that the revolutionary spirit was certainly inherent to Jewish culture, in the sense of a progressive and just vision of life and community. According to him, those who defended the Jews from the accusation of being revolutionary, considering them conservative, made the same mistake of antisemites. He openly sided against the Jews of Galicia, Poland and Russia, all Ashkenazis, and wrote that the Talmud, imposing rules and observance, mitigated and suffocated the revolutionary spirit of the Jews. The Talmud vanished the Jewish spirit through study: "the doctors killed the prophets", Lazare wrote, even though Talmudist rationalist philosophers existed in the tenth century. Particularly interesting, in this regard, is the operation of comparing, through rationalism, Jewish and Arab philosophy to Christian dogmatism (Munk 1859, Renan 1852). Note the considerations about the role of the Jews and of Arab materialism at the court of Frederick II:

> The Jews did not stop there. They preached the materialism of the Arabian philosophers which was to prove so destructive to the Christian faith, and carried abroad the spirit of skepticism. Their activity was such as to give rise to a general belief in the existence of a secret society sworn to the destruction of Christianity. During the thirteenth century, a century which witnessed the rapid development of that complex of humanism, skepticism and paganism which we call the Renaissance, at a time when the Hohenstaufen

> defended the cause of science against dogma, and showed themselves the protectors of Epicureanism, the Jews occupied the first place among scholars and rationalist philosophers. At the Court of the Emperor Frederick II, «that hotbed of irreligion,» they were received with favour and respect. It was they, as Renan has shown, that created Averroism; it was they who established the fame of that Ibn-Roshd, that Averroes whose influence was destined to become so great. Without doubt they had their share, too, in the dissemination of the «blasphemies» of the impious Arabians; blasphemies which an Emperor, fond of science and of philosophy, encouraged. These find their type in the so-called «Blasphemy of the Three Impostors», Moses, Jesus and Mohammed, invented by the theologians, and their spirit is tersely summed up in the saying of the Arabian *soufis*, «What care I for the Kaaba of the Mohammedan, the synagogue of the Jew, or the convent of the Christian !» Truly has Darmesteter written: The Jew was the apostle of unbelief, and every revolt of the mind originated with him, whether secretly or in the open. In that immense foundry of blasphemy maintained by the Emperor Frederick and the princes of Suabia and Aragon, he acted a busy part (https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/jewish/lazare-anti.asp#PREFACE).

The revolutionary process was "the ideological path of revolution", through the slow destruction of the Christian state and economic progress. The analysis of the role that Jewish origins played in the actions and temperament of fundamental figures of European culture saw Montaigne, for example, as a "half Jew" who was sceptical of his own origins. The same, of course, applied to Spinoza who perfectly expressed Jewish components in his metaphysics, a reason Schleiermacher considered him the "prince of the atheists" and "intoxicated by God", the same way Lazare recalled Spinozism in the philosophy of Goethe, of Novalis, and of the German romantics and metaphysicians.[2] Of course, Lazare also addressed Freemasonry, to whose birth the Kabbalist Jews participated, as well as to other secret associations like Young Germany, the *Carboneria*, and the Roman Massonic lodge "*Alta Vendita*". These associations only shared an affinity of ideals with Jewish culture, and Jews were participants but not promoters. That would make Jewish people founders of contemporary industrial and financial capitalism, and at the same time their main opponents:

[2] Lazare reports in a note about Spinoza and atheism: Colerus 1706 one of the most important biographies of the Dutch philosopher written by a contemporary.

> Rothschild is the antithesis of Marx and Lassalle; the struggle for money finds its counterpart in the struggle against money, and the worldwide outlook of the stock-speculator finds its answer in the international proletarian and revolutionary movement. It was Marx who gave the first impulse to the founding of the International through the manifesto of 1847, drawn up by himself and Engels. Not that it can be said that he «founded» the International, as is maintained by those who persist in regarding the International as a secret society controlled by the Jews. Many causes led to the organization of the International, but from Marx proceeded the idea of a Labour Congress, which was held at London in 1864, and resulted in the founding of that society. The Jews constituted a very large proportion of its members, and in the General Council of the society, we find Karl Marx, Secretary for Germany and Russia, and James Cohen, secretary for Denmark. Many of the Jewish members of the International took part subsequently in the Commune, where they found others of their faith. In the organization of the socialistic party, the Jews participated to the greatest extent. Marx and Lassalle in Germany, Aaron Libermann and Adler in Austria, Dobrojan Gherea in Roumania, are or were at one time its creators and its leaders. The Jews of Russia deserve special notice in this brief resume. Young Jewish students, scarcely escaped from the Ghetto, have played an important part in the Nihilistic propaganda; some, among them women, have given up their lives for the cause of liberation, and to these young Jewish physicians and lawyers, we must add the large number of exiled workingmen who have founded in London and in New York important labour societies, which serve as centres of socialistic and even of anarchistic propaganda (https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/jewish/lazare-anti.asp#PREFACE).

Lazare thought that since Marx himself had been a descendant of rabbis and doctors, he was endowed with an extraordinary logical force of lucid Talmudism that made him a sociologist as much as an innate economist. Lazare identifies, from Spinoza to Marx, the leitmotif of ancient Jewish materialism that envisaged the realization of heaven on earth, and that doubted the possibility of an afterlife. As for Heine, Marx derived his sarcasm and spirit of rebellion from his Jewish heritage.

However, from Lazare's point of view, the Jewish working class could not be considered an agitator of revolutions, since it was atheist and participated to the labour movement for social reasons rather than religious reasons, while maintaining its own language to communicate with the rest of the movement. These were the Jews in London and the United States, while those persecuted in Poland and Russia took part in the Jewish revolution and remained Jews. The antisemites that Lazare regarded as

Christians did not actually dispute the Judaism of Marx or Manin, but the inclusion of the Jews as such in "their" societies. For the simplistic reasoning of antisemites, economic, social changes, and advanced stages of capitalism did not come into play. In comparison with a period of wellbeing prior to the entry of the Jews, the subsequent social difficulties were attributed to the new disturbers. The central issue remains the accusation of "Judaizing" and "de-Christianizing" society. Hence the origin of numerous Christian prejudices like Jewish stench, Jewish diseases and, above all, ritual murder. Lazare dwells on this question to analyse the origins of this accusation, which he traced back to the twelfth century. He discussed the Blois' episode, where for the first time the Jews were accused of having crucified a child to celebrate Easter. The accused was subjected to the water test, and afterwards Count Théobald de Chartres had thirty-four male Jews and seventeen female Jews burned. After all, correctly reported Lazare, the Romans themselves had accused the first Christians of the same facts, according to the accusation of a realistic interpretation of the last supper. The extremely lucid and powerful response to the accusations of ritual sacrifices attributed to the Jews is extraordinarily secular and rational, as well as informed of the Mosaic books. Lazare claimed that the Jewish prescription inciting to blood and human sacrifices are part of all cultures in the early stages of civilization. This did not imply, of course, that no Jew had ever shed blood or been a murderer. Lazare even recognized that in the Middle Ages many Jews were necromancers and probably made human sacrifices or procured the blood of virgins, but such behaviours, as for Christians, are not attributed to Jewish or Christian culture, but to the role of magicians.

Ultimately, the true danger was in the decisive role that Jewish people that they were playing in the birth of the modern spirit, thanks to their intervention in the history of liberalism, especially in Germany. The secularism of the Jews would be the cause of a certain de-Christianization and, therefore, from an antisemitic perspective, of a certain "denationalization". Here Lazare expresses a judgment of great political finesse, speaking of the difference between nation and state. Liberalism does not denationalize: it kills the old Christian state. Lazare conceived the state as feudal, exclusionary, theocratic, in opposition to a neutral and secular state that antisemitism was fighting. And it was precisely the figure of the Jew who testified the end of the Christian state. The Jews who occupy civil functions do not destroy the Christian state. It is the Christian state that came to an end when the Jews could hold civil office.

Thus, in *L'Antisémitisme* Lazare analysed not only the symbolic status to which the Jews had been subjected, but also the elaboration by the Jews of the symbolic nature of the accusations made against them. A hatred caused by *being* Jews forced them to *act* as "Jews", which in turn prompted the accusation of *being* victims, but not entirely innocent victims.

Again in this work, Lazare considered assimilation a solution to the Jewish issue, but he did not escape the contradiction between nationalistic antisemitism that reproaches the Jews with non-assimilation, and the same antisemitism that refuses integration of the Jews. In that sense, as seen in the writings from the *Affaire Dreyfus* onwards, the contradiction was bound to explode because of the Christians' desire to marginalize the Jews, the Jewish exclusivist attitude, and the need for assimilation. The only way to avoid these contradictions was secularization, which would have highlighted what was already clear to anarchist socialist Lazare: that antisemitism is a class attitude, and that the conflict is between rich Christians and rich Jews, according to the principle of the struggle between national and foreign capital. Therefore antisemitism was a bourgeois attitude, not widespread among the people, except as a vague prejudice.

This concludes *L'Antisémitisme*, forecasting Lazare's future positions where he, with Theodor Herzl, would be forced to remember and claim his Jewish roots, recognizing himself in a national history, far from Zionism, from which to see and act the universal anarchist principles of freedom, equality and justice.

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Wilhelm Marr (1819–1904) and the Left in Germany: The Birth of Modern Antisemitism

Didier Musiedlak

Wilhelm Marr's Personality

The birth of modern antisemitism in Germany is often associated with journalist Wilhelm Marr, whose life stretched through both the upheavals of 1848 and the birth of the German Empire (Brustein 2003: 131, Puschner 1990: 247–249).[1] Marr does not occupy an important place *a priori* in the antisemitic movement, unlike pastor Adolf Stoecker, nationalist Heinrich von Treitscke, or Houston Stewart Chamberlain. However, because of his fame, the study of his life and impact in German society makes it possible to better understand the modes of dissemination of antisemitism, and to better measure its originality. Although he is credited with coining the concept of antisemitism, a point we will examine later on, Marr's career has interested only one biographer, Moshe Zimmermann,

[1] Marr, generally recognized as the inventor of the term antisemitism.

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who published a work entitled *Wilhelm Marr The Patriarch of Antisemitism* (Zimmermann 1986). Born in Magdeburg in 1819 to an actor father, who then became director of a Hamburg theater, nothing in Marr's itinerary predicted his notoriety or originality. Politically speaking, he was on the left side of the spectrum, and he did his ideological apprenticeship in Switzerland, a refuge for Europeans who were being persecuted for their political commitment. Marr was introduced by Julius Fröbel, a member of the Radical Party and director of the newspaper *Der schweizerische Republikaner* (*The Swiss Republican*), and his circle, and to poet Georg Herwegh, who also belonged to this radical fraction. Under the influence of Wilhem Weitling, the first German theorist of communism, who had moved to Zurich in the spring of 1843, Marr became a communist in connection with utopian socialism. After six weeks in Switzerland, Marr was expelled from Zurich because of his political activities. He then moved to Lausanne, where he established contacts with the *Young Germany* (*Jungedeutschland*).[2] This radical movement of the first half of the nineteenth century advocated for democracy, the constitutional state, and emancipation. In the spring of 1843, Marr joined the *Young German Confederation of Lake Geneva*, founded in Switzerland by socialists Hermann Döleke and Jules Standau. It is around this time that he became an atheist and an anarchist, and began his career as a journalist and editor. After being deported several times from Switzerland and Germany, he moved to Hamburg in 1845, where he was when the 1848 revolution broke out. His expulsion from Switzerland in 1845 was motivated more by his atheism than by his political activities.

During this period, his action was directed by a criticism of the established institutional forms (state, property, and religion). We can detect Proudhon's influence in his writings, especially *The Social Question*. The concept of "people" begins to emerge in his thinking but is not yet fixed (*Young Germany*, 1846). This idea is understood from a materialistic perspective, but is not yet connected with racial theories about the Jews. During the 1848 Revolution, Marr was elected to Hamburg's 1849 Constituent Assembly as a far-left representative of the Radical Democratic

[2] The term "Young Germany" describes a rather heterogeneous group of writers from around 1830 to 1850, the journalist Karl Gutzkow Ludolf Wienbarg, Theodor Mundt, Heinrich Laube, the poet Georg Herwegh, the satirist writer Karl Ludwig Börne, or Heinrich Heine. These authors were only in loose contact with each other, but were connected by the rejection of the restoration, the absolutist state, and their struggle for freedom of the press and free speech as well as for socialist ideas.

Party. In his perception, the Revolution was the only way to create a republican state. At first, he was in favor of the emancipation of the Jews, but quickly came to think that the liberalism of the Frankfurt Parliament only served their interests.

The failure of the Revolution was for him both a political and ideological rupture. After seeing his hopes thwarted as an elected member of the Assembly, Marr, from the autumns of 1849 onwards, advocated for a German state under Prussia, embracing Bismarck's point of view of a revolution made from above (*von oben*). He saw himself as the German Mazzini—whom he met in 1851 (Zimmermann 1986: 59–61). It is at around this time that his political thought started to be gradually dominated by the Jewish question and the matter of race, which then came to over-determine his political commitment. In 1852 he left Europe and travelled through Central America for seven years, probably engaging in the slave trade (Zimmermann 1979: 225, Rose 1990: 281–282).

By the time he returned to Germany, in 1859, he was convinced that races were not all equal. In his 1863 book, *Journey to Central America*, his racism came to light, even though at the time he had not yet made the connection between racism and his already well-entrenched anti-Judaism. On June 13, 1861, he published an antisemitic article, in which he indirectly attacked liberal Jewish politician Gabriel Riesser (1806–1863), at the time president in exercise of the Hamburg Council, and defender of the legal emancipation of the Jews (Zimmermann 1975: 59–84).

Marr rejected the idea of assimilation as a means for the Jews to become German, and believed Jews and Germans to be opposed by a complete antagonism. Placing himself within a tradition of anti-Jewish literature, such as Johannes Pfefferkorn's 1507 *Judenspiegel*, and Hartwig von Hundt-Radowsky's incendiary pamphlet of 1819 (Bergmann 2016), Marr saw the ultimate goal of Jewish emancipation to be integration and the consequent disappearance of the Jews into the state. Upon their total assimilation, Jews would finally vanish.

In terms of Marr's ideological radicalism, two moments are to be distinguished. The first takes the form of a pamphlet, *Der Sieg des Judentums über das Germanentum* (*The Victory of the Jews over the Germans*, 1879). The book became a bestseller in Germany with twelve reprints in its first year. In this book, Marr starts by attacking Jews for their religion. Then, he moves on to Jewish culture, highlighting the so-called mercantile spirit of the Jews that contributed greatly to the development of trade and industry in Germany (Mosse 1989, Pulzer 2003). However, since the

Jews have no homeland, the risk is for Germans to become enslaved, subject to the political and «legal feudalism» of Judaism. He describes Judaism as the Constitution leading to the formation of a "State within the State". The biggest danger "a real *Kulturkampf*, against the German culture with an ambition of world conquest (*Weltherrschaft*). Marr uses many times the word "foreign domination." (*Fremdeherrschaft*). In short, the Jewish question was a political and social problem and not a religious one.

In his second pamphlet, *The path of victories of Germanism over Judaism* (*Der Weg zum Siege des Germanenthums Über das Judenthum*, 1880), Marr introduces the idea that the Germans and the Jews are locked in a conflict, whose origins he attributes to the many advantages of the Jews. Taking up the idea that emancipation is the outcome of German liberalism, he argues that it has enabled the Jews to control the German financial and industrial systems. Since this clash is based on the different qualities of the two races, the total assimilation of the Jewish population cannot be resolved. This struggle between Jews and Germans will only end in the victory for one and death for the other. For Marr, the *Jewish Question* was socio-political and it had to be fought politically (Lange 2007: 120). The pessimistic tone of his *Victory of Jewry over Germandom* could not conceal a call to action, but in a new form of struggle (Marr 1879). Marr specifically rejected old anti-Jewish religion-based persecutory measures, like persecutions, expulsions, and pogroms, lobbying instead for a continuous political effort, institutionalized in parties, propaganda associations, and newspapers (Lindemann & Levy 2010: 128). He aimed to establish a new practice, based on clear rules. What remained implicit in *The Victory of Jewry*, became explicit in Marr's next pamphlet, written in July 1879, *Elect No Jews!* It bore the subtitle, "*The way to victory of Germandom over Jewry*," and it launched antisemitism into German political culture (Marr 1880). A Jewish victory, he concluded, would lead to the end of Germany, which is why Marr founded in 1879 *the League of Antisemites*, the first German organization specifically dedicated to fighting the alleged threat.

Marr and the Debate on the Creation of the Concept of Antisemitism

Marr has often been credited with creating the concept of antisemitism. It is necessary to have a real perception of what is anti-Judaism is before the beginning of the 1880s. German historians distinguish two periods. The first phase, called "early antisemitism" (*Frühantisemitismus*) to distinguish it from traditional anti-Judaism, was characterized by a latency of

anti-Jewish sentiments that developed from the end of the eighteenth century until the first half of the nineteenth century. In Germany, it was between 1767 and 1822 that the *Völkisch* movement, a type of antisemitism linked to exclusionary ethnic nationalism is established with modern antisemitism (Best 2004: 84). The word provides a new definition to an old enemy. First, it designated a secularized form of the aversion toward the Jews and their "ideology". The religious question became secondary, as the Jews became identified with the capitalist bourgeoisie (Nipperdey & Rürup 1972: 141–142). In the 1970s, historian Reinhard Rürup had highlighted the close relationship between political antisemitism and the emancipation of the Jews on the one hand, and changes of the civil society in nineteenth century Germany on the other (Rürup 1975).

After the Napoleonic occupation, the demand for national unity in Germany developed around a fundamentalist stance. The invasion, with its universal principles and values, had crushed ethnic and national identity. To preserve Germanity (*Deutschheit*), the watchword was to defend what embodied *Volkstum* at the highest level, namely *Kultur* and popular traditions. The awakening of German national consciousness with the wars of liberation had begun to instill a dangerous antisemitic sentiment, while at the same time legitimizing Prussian authority through the *Obrigkeit* (Nipperdey 1983: 131). It was in this context that the Jews were assimilated to the figure of the Enemy (Jeismann 1999: 173–190). The rise of modern bourgeois society was paving the way to the proclamation of equality and the establishment of an open society of a competitive nature. Between the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, writers and journalists started to portray Jewish national identity as concealing a "foreign body", a *State in the State*. These commentators were romantic agitators who considered the French and "the Jewish people" (*das Judenvolk*), or "unrefined Jews" (*verfeinerte schlechte Juden*), were bad luck for Germany. The Jew was a foreign subject that called into question the Christian faith, and the nationalism of the people as an autonomous organic unit. Luther had been the first to denounce the supposed imposture of the Jews of claiming to be the chosen people, a theme reprised by Kant, Schopenhauer, and later by Nietzsche. These perspectives added up to yield a conspiracy climate grounded in the idea that Judaism was not a religion, but rather a people who aimed to control Europe by starting with colonizing the Germans.

This movement took a radical form in popular circles by drawing support in civil society. It is worth mentioning here the *burschenschaftliche Wartburgfest* of 1817, where books by French and Jewish authors, and the

revolt of craftsmen, often members of Christian guilds of merchants. The *Hep-Hep or Hepp-Hepp* riots of 1819 which started in Würzburg against the Jews, reached many cities of the German Confederation (Rohrbacher 1993: 94–156, Zimmermann 2017). The campaign was orchestrated by romantic agitators such as Ernst Moritz Arndt and Friedrich Ludwig Jahn. This protohistory of antisemitism in Germany (Sterling 1950) was exhumed in 1950 by Eleonore Sterling.

The idea of the German Movement for Unity was associated with doctrines that substituted the traditional religious hostility towards the Jews with biologically based antagonism. In a hierarchical ranking of human races, peoples were given collective and immutable qualities. Several intellectuals and journalists doubted the success of education as well as of legal and economic equality as means of emancipations, as a large section of the Jewish population was considered unfit for assimilation.

In his controversy over the endangerment of the well-being and character of the Germans by the Jews (*Über die Gefährdung des Wohlstandes und Charakters der Deutschen durch die Juden* 1816), liberal philosopher Jakob Friedrich Fries had called himself anti-Jewish. While first distinguishing Judaism from the Jews, he applied also his negative descriptions to individuals, arguing in favor of affixing a distinctive emblem on their clothes to make them stand out from the rest of the population.

Hartwig von Hundt-Radowsky was the first German to demand, in 1819, the extermination of the Jews (*Ausrottung*, removing roots) in his pamphlet, *A Mirror to the Jews* (Hundt-Radowsky 1819). Within the three weeks after its publication, the book was reprinted for a total of 10,000 copies. The Jews, Hartwig von Hundt-Radowsky wrote in 1819, had too many children, and were reluctant to work. Unlike the churches of ancient times, he did not want to convert the Jews, but rather to expel them. As early as 1819, Hundt-Radowsky was already designing a whole program for this purpose, based on stigma and ghettoization, enslavement, then deportation and finally annihilation (Fasel 2010). The second half of the nineteenth century amplified this first movement, and did not bring anything fundamentally new. Social Darwinism and racial biology, together with the progression of Jews in bourgeois society, were powerful vectors for this hostility. After the founding of the German Empire in 1871, antisemitism was linked to the rise of nationalism. In 1861, Johann Nordmann published *Die Juden und der Deutsche Staat* (*Jews and the German State*) in which he argued that Jews belonged not only to a separate religion or church, but also to a particular type of race. Furthermore, Nordmann suggested that a specific Jewish "type" with physical characteristics (nose,

effeminacy, shortness, etc.) existed. The second half of the nineteenth century was characterized by a period of consolidation of these concepts, that, supported by linguists and ethnologists, became widespread both in civil society an in the political discussion. *The Bluntschli Bratersche dictionary* (1857, 1865) and the *Rotteck Welckersche dictionary* (4th edition of 1865) contain eloquent articles on this point. In *the Bluntschli dictionary*, "Aryans" and "Semites" were described, with positive values assigned to Aryans, and negative ones to Semites (Nipperdey & Rürup 1972: 131). As early as 1910, the *Encyclopedy Britannica*, wrote that the Movement was born in Germany to then spread in the regions under the control of the Habsburgs and in France, before taking particularly violent forms in Russia and Romania (Wolf 1910).

The terms Jews and Judaism underwent a semantic shift during this time. Until the end of the eighteenth century, the term "Jew" was defined as belonging to a religious community. The concept of Jew then gradually secularized. Since the late eighteenth century, Jews began to be seen as part of a "nation", the Jewish nation, and the secular conceptions of Jews and Judaism that emerged in the nineteenth century encompassed many of the negative ideas that had been growing. Since the early 1870s, the term "Semite" started to be used more and more as a fashionable word with pseudo-scientific connotations.

The 1880s saw the emergence of the concept of antisemitism, but it was not Marr's pen that coined it. The first document referencing the word can be found in "*Allgemeine Zeitung des deutschen Judentums*" (*General Journal of German Judaism*, September 2, 1879) which lists the publication of an "antisemitic weekly" by Marr, *Der Sieg des Judentum*. This is surprising since Marr had referred to the newspaper as "social-political" or "anti-Jewish", but not as "antisemitic". The word "antisemitism" does not appear in it (Nipperdey & Rürup 1972: 138). From November 1879 to March 1880, Marr published "*Die deutsche Wacht. Monthly for national cultural interests (Organ of the anti-Jewish Union*). At the end of 1879, the word "antisemitic" is first mentioned, and from the beginning of 1880, it is more recurrent in the *Deutsche Wacht* (*The New German Guard*), but no justification is given to the use of the new term. It is only in the Spring of 1880 that Marr, who began to publish the antisemitic notebooks, *Antisemitische Heften* (Chemnitz 1880), legitimized the word.

The term "antisemite" was therefore probably coined by an employee of the *Allgemeine Zeitung* and then circulated in Berlin circles hostile to the Jewish people. Presumably, the word was created in the early fall of

1879 in Berlin by journalists in Marr's *entourage* (Berding 1991: 77). The formation of the word was in line with the social climate of the time, and Marr's name was mentioned by his contemporaries in this regard. The word was never neither defined nor commented, being self-explanatory. What is certain is that the word "antisemitism" was not the product of science like the term "Semitism", but rather it was immediately transformed into a political slogan to serve the identity and ideology of a party. At the end of September 1879, announcements in Berlin called for the creation of an "antisemitic" league. In early October, the statute of the association "Antisemitic League" appeared. The group led only an obscure existence, but also attracted the attention of liberal newspapers, that talked about its establishment. The meaning of the association was defined clearly. The "Antisemitic League" thus made it possible to popularize the term antisemitism. There is every reason to believe that the concept of antisemitism refers to the birth of the Era of Masses, as K.D. Bracher recalled it, alongside the emergence of neologisms like socialism and nationalism (Bracher 1978: 19–20).

The Complexity of German Antisemitism

Far from being an isolated case, the example of Wilhelm Marr is thus representative of a whole generation, and of a well-established current of thought. Wilhelm Marr considered himself the descendant of the radical liberal generation of 1848, with their nationalist republican, anticlerical and romantic ideals. He also called for the destruction of the influence of the Catholic Church and the Jesuits, as well as the end of the "Semitic" domination of banks, credit institutions and press. His intense hostility to the Catholic Church was summed up in the popular pan-German slogan "Without Judah, without Rome, we will build the dome of Germany" (*Ohne Juda ohne Rom wird gebaut Germaniens Dom*).

Several factors contributed to the spreading of antisemitic thought on the political left, firstly, the secular anticlerical tradition from the Enlightenment. Attacks by French philosophers, like Voltaire, to the Old Testament and the Jewish origins of Christianity influenced Marx as well as German radicals such as Bruno Bauer, Wilhelm Marr and Eugen Dühring, who laid the foundations for modern racial antisemitism. It was Hegel who showed that the Jews resist assimilation and universalism. According to him, they remain strangers forever, *Fremder*, nomads condemned to wandering, who are left out of history. In 1844, Karl Marx found himself at the crossroads of this intellectual development, still under

the spell of the philosophical tradition of the young Hegel and of his main representatives, Bruno Bauer, Ludwig Feuerbach, and Moses Hess. *Zur Judenfrage* and *The Holy Family* are both transitional works on the road to mature Marxism. In neither of these studies there was any specific mention of capitalism, of the industrial proletariat, of socialism or of class struggle. It was not before the *German ideology* (1846) that Marx and Engels presented a fully developed materialist interpretation of history.

In pre-unification Germany, the 1830s and 1840s, there were radical Jews, like journalist Ludwig Boerne or Marx himself, who identified Jews with capitalism and assimilated "the Jewish spirit" to the "universal dominion" of money. Indeed, the Jewish radicals who insisted that the social Judaization of the Jew was intrinsic to the achievement of universal human emancipation were generally among the most extreme in their hostility to Judaism. Their antipathy went far beyond the rejection of religion and tribalism, or simple aversion to cultural particularism. The anti-Jewish contempt manifested by socialists of Jewish origin (Karl Marx, Ferdinand Lassalle, Rosa Luxemburg, Victor Adler, Otto Bauer, or the young Bernard Lazare) speaks of how they were determined to extinguish their own Jewishness, enveloping this wish for ethnic death in the name of a universal Brotherhood of Man. Among the various methods used, was a systematic process of denigration of Jewish religious practices and customs such as circumcision or the alleged inferiority of the Yiddish language.

Many similarities in terms of vocabulary existed between this socialist Left and the *völkisch* movement. For such leftist Judeophobes, the exclusion of the Jewish community was a necessary precondition for the "redemption" of humanity. Ironically, the more the Jewish radicals sought to not be identified as Jews, thus showing their ostentatious indifference towards their own people, the more it came to haunt them and fuel antisemitic obsessions about a secret Jewish plot for world domination. Jewish socialists and communists were convinced that their future was within a culturally progressive development in the spirit of the French Revolution of 1789. Leaving the ghetto behind, the Jews were to be absorbed completely into their non-Jewish environment and disappear. Beyond the heritage of the Enlightenment, some Social Democrats did not hesitate to take up stereotypes used by antisemites. Certain prominent socialists such as August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht had ambiguous ideas. Bebel sometimes echoed antisemitic discourses on "Jewish exploitation" or the quasi-Darwinian notion that racial traits can be transmitted over time. He presented the alleged inclination and readiness of the Jews to "trade" like a fact of nature. The physical appearance of the Jews, as well as their role

as intermediary and their presence in capitalist economic development, were considered by the leader of the SPD as major social causes of anti-semitism. There are also many traces of anti-Jewish prejudices in the letters that Marx and Engels exchanged, revealing a clear tendency to think along racial lines.

In the early 1880s, nothing disturbed public opinion more than the "Jewish question" nourished by a popular ethnography, according to which there was a recognizable Jewish type:

> We immediately distinguish the Jew by his face, his entire bearing, the way he holds his head, his gesticulation, and even the most assimilated Jew, if the expression may be permitted, can still be recognized by some feature of his race. […] But if we are required to define this type and provide any general formula for it, we find ourselves at a loss, for our terminology and our powers of definition lag behind, unable to keep pace with our emotion and our intuition. (Robertson 1999: 165)[3]

The Social Democrats, as an extra-parliamentary opposition, remained silent in the debate, leaving the field open to left-wing liberals. No leading social democrat raised his voice in defense of the Jews during this period. It was only later that some awareness took shape. Following antisemitic riots in the form of pogroms on 29 December 1880 in Berlin, the Social Democrats organized a mass rally to clarify the workers' position on the Jewish question. Also, in the following months social democratic workers demonstrated in front of antisemitic assemblies.

In reality, there was ambivalence in German antisemitism shared by the Left and the Right.

The Ambivalence of Antisemitism Between Left and Right

Everything seems to indicate that antisemitic sentiments were present both in the Left and in the Right, until they began to develop further within the conservative right in the 1880s–1890s. The phenomenon consolidated in Germany after 1880 in the racist writings of Wilhelm Marr, Otto Glagau and Eugen Dühring. All of them were radical writers and journalists with an almost socialist past, and emphasized in their writings that *Judenfrage* was a social issue. In his magazine, *Der Kulturkämpfer* (1880–1888), journalist

[3] See the anthropologist's works of Richard Andrée. He argued for the continuity of Jewish physical traits over time (Andrée 1881: 37, Hart 1995: 162).

Otto Glagau assimilated Jews to liberalism and capitalism. In the climate of social aggression engendered by the stock market crash of 1873, he called into question the economic liberalism of the 1870s, with overtones of left-wing antisemitism, becoming one of the earliest to publicly blame Jews for the crisis. Glagau claimed that 90 percent of the companies gone bankrupt were controlled by Jews. *Die Gartenlaube* (350,000/400,000 readers) published a series of articles by Glagau. In these articles, he reiterated his claim about the role of Jewish speculators in the crash, stating that an invasion of *Ostjuden* from the area of Posen seeking to become rich on the German Stock Exchange had played a role in the crash. Socialist Wilhelm Hasselmann, a member of the Reichstag and editor in chief of the *Neuer Sozial-Demokrat*, identified in his definition of the *homo capitalisticus* with the iniquities of Jewish merchants and bankers (Wistrich 1990: 35). He consciously appealed to embittered artisans and businessmen who had been hit hard by the crash, saying that the "Semites" were seeking to impose their tribal racial dominance on German Christians through banks, the stock market, liberal parties, and the state. During an exchange with Bernstein, he did not hesitate to attack him over his Jewish origins. This left-wing antisemitism would be skillfully used by the conservatives in their own arguments during the economic crisis.

The stock market crash of 1873, combined with the transformation of capitalism during the Second Industrial Revolution, fueled a brutal reaction against liberal political culture. German antisemites saw themselves as the organizers of a defensive movement opposed to "Jewish domination". Between 1870 and 1914, the German population changed its social base. Many non-Jews threatened by socioeconomic decline were convinced that Jews were a particular menacing «race» that wanted to conquer them (Berghahn 2005: 98–99). By identifying Jewish merchants and bankers with the *homo capitalisticus*, Glagau and other radical antisemites of the 1870s perpetuated a communist tradition that had begun with Marx (without the intellectual sophistication of the Hegelian dialectic) during the transition to mass society, thus opening up a large space for antisemites.

The antisemitic anti-Christian *Völkisch* tradition in nineteenth century Germany and Austria, led by Otto Böckel found expression in the plebeian populist turmoil that claimed to be above parties and religious denominations. Böckel's *Antisemitische Volkspartei*, which won several parliamentary seats in the 1890s, embodied a populist revolt against the parliamentary system of the Second Reich, standing against metropolitan culture, big business, the world of industry, the Jews, and the Prussian aristocracy. At the same time, Böckel's anti-modernism represented the conservative aspects of

modern German antisemitism, and his *völkisch* romantic aspirations for a pre-industrial culture. However, as Otto Glagau and Dühring, Böckel strongly rejected the Judeo-Christian vision, and defended *Mittelstand*'s interests against the Junkers, the capitalists, and the Jews. Even the title of one of his best-known pamphlets, *Die Juden—Die Könige unsere Zeit* (1887), which notably attacked the Rothschilds, consciously recalled the antisemitic work of French socialist Alphonse Toussenel, a disciple of Fourier (Toussenel 1845, Sternhell 1984: 177, Crapez 1997: 235).

Wilhelm Marr thus appears as one of the vectors of the spread of antisemitism in Germany during the rise of political antisemitism and of antisemitic movements. It would be a mistake to impute to him the development of such movements. Marr popularized the term antisemitism but did not invent it (Waldenegg 2003). The birth of modern antisemitism is more an expression of the cultural climate of the time, resulting in a shift in public opinion in the German Empire. The word was first used by the scholar of Jewish history, Moritz Steinschneider against the thinking of Ernest Renan (Marcus 2015: 58), but the racialist definition appears too restrictive by excluding forms of a more general phenomenon such as ethnic and religious prejudice or xenophobia (Zikelnat 2008). This means that antisemitism was not only an instrument of political conflict, but also the symptom of a particular zeitgeis (Pulzer 2004). For this reason, antisemitism cannot be limited to Marr's racist definition, but encompasses a set of negative attitudes, ideologies, and practices directed at Jews as Jews, individually or collectively (Marcus 2013).

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Sorel and the Jewish Question

Luca Basile

A Periodization

This chapter outlines the key elements of Georges Sorel's ideas on the Jewish question, to evaluate how the author, between changes and revisions, approached the topic as a whole.

Sorel's relationship with Judaism represents one of the most controversial aspects of the Norman philosopher-engineer. On the lines of Shlomo Sand, this chapter identifies in Sorel's writing a progressive trajectory from positions that show a positive judgement of the historic role played by the Jewish people, to an increasingly bitter criticism that was subsequently reabsorbed in a final phase (Sand 1984, 1985). This phase, albeit characterized by oscillations, renewed the critique on Jewish separatism, but stopped short of affirming crude antisemitism. In order to do so, a periodization is required, starting with 1889–1890, when Sorel began to reflect on the idea of a Jewish identity. From 1906 onwards, Sorel grew hostile to the Jewish world, with such hostility reaching its peak in 1911–1912 with his support to conservative periodical *L'Indépendence*, and receded and stabilized from 1913 onwards.

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Following this timeline will hopefully help to shed light on the limits of historiographical accounts that seek to enclose *tout court* the mature Sorel in the ideological sector of antisemitism (Sternhell 1983, Serra 1992). In fact, the beginning of the antisemitic wave corresponds with the long-term development of political stands on the Dreyfus affair, seen as a meeting point between vast sections of the labour and socialist movements, and the Jacobin character of the progressive democratic world. This ideological encounter exasperated those "underlying contradictions, that escape the gaze of politicians",[1] and that had already surfaced in September 1899 (Sorel 1899) in regard to the socialists' positions on the affair.

In this chapter, I discuss how Sorel began by appreciating the Jews and their cultural identity, considering it almost revolutionary, and how the loss of faith in the French Socialist movement unleashed a radical change in his attitude that was tied to his sympathies for the militant aspects of the contemporary reactionary world, and embedded in his lifelong fascination for conservative ideals. For Sorel, Jewish elites became clear examples of a tendency to lead society "from above", similar to Jacobin intellectualism. He maintained this position until death, but gradually balanced it out by making a distinction between the direction and policy attributed to Jewish leadership, and indiscriminate aversion to Jewishness.

The chapter will conclude with a mention of how Sorel's judgement, in all its evolutions, suffers from the tendency to give precedence to ideas on Jewish culture and social role that are not historically accurate, despite the many sources and knowledge that Sorel had access to while studying the matter.

Initial Assessment of the Jewish People

From 1889, Sorel started reading and collecting documents on Jewish culture, investigating its ideological profile in the context of the discussions on socialism that were taking place on periodicals like *L'Ére Nouvelle*, *Devenir Sociale* (written between 1893 and 1894) and then, from 1895, on Lagardelle's *La Jeunesse Socialiste*. On the latter, he published *Sémites et Cléricaux* (Sand 1984: 10) in which he condemned the ties between clericalism and antisemitism, in relation to the lack of mobilization of the socialists against the Dreyfus affair, and the many antisemitic allusions published in the socialist press. In a context already scarred by conflicts

[1] Sorel, Georges. 1899. Socialismo e democrazia. Conclusioni sulla faccenda Dreyfus. *Rivista critica del socialismo*, 11–12, December: 966.

between "Judeophobes" and "Judeophiles"—summarized by Réguard, following Drumont, in the volume *La France Jouive*, and by anarchic-socialist Bernard-Lazare in his book *L'Antisémitisme*—Sorel conceived antisemitism as an inclination to project on the Jewish people an attempt to influence and control society. For Sorel, this inclination was instead typical of Jesuitism and of its ideology, and a perspective that an intellectual *demi-monde* looking for affirmation might choose to embrace. At this stage, engaging in a sort of recurring dialogue with Renan's historiography (Petrucci 2007), Sorel described in a positive light the Jewish people, and questioned the naturalistic slant of mainstream antisemitism. He wrote that "Jews are the least theological men in the world,"[2] therefore one had to appreciate their vocation, built over time, to depend only on work, intellectual heritage, and science (Racinaro 1978: 172–188) to defend their community, with no recourse to cursory extrinsic justifications.

Sorel overturned the stereotypes that many people loathingly attributed to the Jews and developed, albeit with profound modifications, some of Renan's theories on justice (Sand 1984: 11). For him these theories could be of great support to spread that socialist awareness whose materialistic and immanentistic principles he adhered to, however originally, from 1893, the year he joined the editorial board of *L'Ére Nouvelle*.

Sorel maintained these ideas until 1897. Instead, between 1898 (when Zola published the famous *J'accuse*) and 1901, he supported the Dreyfus cause. In particular, the article *Socialism and Democracy—Conclusions on the Dreyfus affair*, published in 1899 in the *Rivista Critica del Socialismo* edited by Francesco Saverio Merlino, proves Sorel's proximity to Bernstein's theories and, more generally, his explicit acceptance that socialists needed to get involved in democratic institutions. He claimed this while recognizing that socialists were already conflating towards themes and languages connected to democratic progressivism, an idea he later refuted, seeing how socialists were being reabsorbed in Jacobinism. In this period, in which he began to make contacts with trading unions, especially thanks to his friendship with Pelloutier and to initial meetings with Vallois in the editorial board of the *Humanitée Nouvelle*, (Gervasoni 1997: 122–126, 348–366). Sorel saw how the 'Dreyfus affair' had taken on a paradigmatic value, upsetting "the whole masterpiece of artificial organisation" that "the socialist bosses […] had laboriously built and

[2] Sorel, Georges. 1895. Sémites et clericaux. *La Jeunesse socialiste*, I: 328.

which seemed destined to quickly place France in their hands".[3] This created a fertile terrain for the differences between Guesdists and Jaurèsians. Thanks to the latter, and in tones similar to Croce's anti-enlightenment realism, Sorel found a starting point that became the basis of his future criticism of political socialism. He explained that democratic socialists:

> had to employ arguments used by the democrats, and invoked Justice, the rights of Humanity, like a simple pettifogger would (Ibidem, 973).

Although recognizing the inevitable conversion of socialism into a workers' movement within democracy after the entrance of Millerand to the Ministry in the Waldeck-Rousseau government, Sorel stressed the risks of a possible contamination of the movement from bourgeois-Jacobin intellectualism, since it was prone to proliferate among the proletarian vanguard. However, the philosopher was willing to support the alliance between socialists and democrats to further transformation, and he considered the conflict over antisemitism a contributory factor to this strategy. Examples of this were his suggestion to Lagardelle in 1898 to publish an article by Lafargue attacking such strategy in *Le Mouvement Socialiste*, or when in 1899 he reviewed Lombroso's volume on antisemitism in the *Revue Internationale de Sociologie*, reiterating the weak and narrow-minded grounds on which this ideological and socio-cultural orientation was based (Sand 1984: 14).

It is mostly due to an article published in October 1900, dedicated to *Les aspects juridiques du socialisme* (Cavallari 1973: 37–93; Pastori 2011: 37–141), and in relation to the Dreyfus case that Sorel contrasts the social push directed at the transformation and resurgent spread of antisemitism in the lower social classes, stigmatizing further their simplistic inclination to trace the causes of social injustice to a community supposedly acting on atavistic impulses. In general, Sorel also underlined how the proliferation of antisemitism did not reach its peak among the lower classes of society, but rather among the higher echelons of the bourgeoisie. In his judgement, centred on the refusal of a possible tie between anti-capitalism and antisemitism, investigative and conceptual inconsistencies appeared. Even if his analysis situated the prevalence of antisemitic ideas in the higher social classes, supported by the short sighted behaviour of the small

[3] Sorel, Georges. 1899. Socialismo e democrazia. Conclusioni sulla faccenda Dreyfus. *Rivista critica del socialismo*, 11–12, December: 967.

intellectual bourgeoisie, he did not clarify how such ideas moved between social classes. However, by claiming this in relation to the comparison between contingency and socially cemented opinions of a given historical identity, Sorel applied his revisionist ideas on the Marxist principle of structure/superstructure.

Additionally, in May 1899 in the *Revue Internationale de Sociologie*, Sorel reviewed Platon's volume on the history of fiscal regimes, in which he contested the historical association between usurers and Jewishness. In the same month, he published a long article named *The Gospel, the Church and Socialism*, in the *Rivista Storica del Socialismo Italiano* in which, whilst addressing the arguments of Monsignor Talano on the factual continuity of the "reforms that socialism fought for" with "the principles of Christian morality",[4] Sorel traced the constructive aspects of Christian morality to the Old Testament as a book written for the working class, and from which the possibility of a "peasant democracy" was deducible. Moreover, already in one of his first works in 1899, entitled *Contribution à l'Étude Profane de la Bible*, built on an original form of conservatism, he affirmed that:

> Education is the biggest concern of our contemporary society. We wanted people to read, yet we failed to give them any *Book*. The *Book* of the people exists: it is the Bible. The vulgarisation of it is currently a social question. The Bible is the only book that can be deemed useful to the education of the people, initiating them to a heroic life, and fighting the detrimental tendencies of utilitarianism. (Sorel 1899: VII)

In particular, distancing himself from a certain interpretative line derived from the Marxist *Judenfrage*, Sorel refused the interpretation of Judaism as a mercantile religion characterized by a vocation for income. Following a deep-rooted characterization, he qualified Christianity as a 'Jewish circle' adapted to 'Greco-Roman culture', and as a religion inclined to idleness. The exceptional figure of Saint Paul was associated with hard work, thought to be fundamental to Judaism. As Sorel wrote:

> We know […] that the Israelites had always been industrious: Saint *Paul*, whose testimony was invoked in relation to work, had a lifestyle similar to that of the doctors of the Talmudic tradition. (Sorel 1899: 297)

[4] Sorel, Georges. 1899. Il Vangelo, la Chiesa e il Socialismo. *Rivista critica del socialismo*, 4: 295.

Renan's argument in the *Histoire du Peuple d'Israel* on Judaism as the historical and engendering nucleus of social equality, was used by Sorel to demonstrate how it was "more logical" for socialists to "go to the source itself and to address the synagogue". The "contemporary social movement" showed the bitter contrast "between the application of legal rules and […] moral aspirations" (Sorel 1899: 296), thus making any direct connection with a somewhat positive or pagan-like religion impractical. Instead, Sorel exhorted, a careful and critical understanding of different cultural heritages that should be promoted as a collective exercise ("abiblical culture belongs to everyone").

Transitions

Sorel's perspective changed after the Dreyfus affair not only because of the governments that came after the crisis of 1898–1899, but, in a broader fashion, because of the prospect of the advent of the Dreyfusards to power. While Sorel, with the swearing in of the Waldeck-Rousseau government had hoped to avoid the intellectual and political distortion of the socialists in cahoots with the democrats, the resulting attitudes confirmed to him the Jacobin roots of French statehood. In fact, in 1904, in the "Appendixes" to *La Ruine du Monde Antique*, he wrote that the idealism of the democratic spirit was running out (Gervasoni 1997: 193; Cavallari 2011: 25–26), and, in relation to the participation of Millerand to the government, he dropped all his appreciation for Jaurés, while welcoming some of Guesde's declarations (Sand 1984: 18).

On the basis of a now explicit criticism of the meeting between socialists and the bourgeoisie, Sorel claimed that antisemitic extremism was as a product of the demagogic push within democracy. For example, in an article dedicated to Leo XIII,[5] the growing antisemitism of Lueger in Austria was motivated by a convergence of Catholicism and populism, often degenerating into caricature. However, in that year and in his work on *Le Système Historique de Renan*, concluded three years later, Sorel's tone changed. Often in dialogue with Renan and trying to avoid overlapping ethnicity with socio-economic relations, he began to show a certain broad hostility towards the Jews, especially those in the industrial sector, stopping short of identifying the existence of a *Semitic spirit*.

New analytical elements are especially evident in Sorel's historiographical reconstructions, and accounts of cultural phenomena. In the

[5] Sorel, Georges. 1903: Sorel. Léon XIII. *Études socialistes*, 1: 363.

monograph on Renan, written between 1905 and 1906, Sorel tried to amend his thesis by re-analysing the problem of the link between Judaism and Christianity. Equipped with a good knowledge of the Bible, Sorel had also read the French translation of the Babylonian Talmud, on which he had worked profusely by studying texts like Moses Maimonides'. He also read the research published in the *Revue d'Études Juives* (which he quoted from 1880 (Sand 1984: 21) onwards), and proposed an interpretation that revolved around *continuity* and *rupture*. The discontinuity between the two religious realities was significant, but Sorel recognized the integrating role that Hellenism, absolved by Christianity itself. This integration, to which Sorel purposefully had not given an intrinsic positive value, had, for him but not for Renan, its roots in Judaism. Whereas in ancient Greece and Rome worldliness and theorization prevailed, Judaism had been a meeting point between the push of Hellenism as a barrier to oriental influences, and a religious rebirth. Sorel maintained that Christianity had been generated out of these processes. Additionally, he depicted a well-outlined analogy between Greek society before Socrates, and the Jewish people before the prophets. It is an exquisitely anti-intellectual argument. This established watershed confirmed and transformed his opinion on the degenerative tendencies of the *élites*, in favour of the exhaustion of a certain "heroic" phase, which would culminate in the convergence of the enlightenment-Jacobin ideology with modern democratic values (Maggi 1977: 251–252).

Both Socrates and the Jewish prophets were seen as the precursor of the philosophers of the Enlightenment, and of the later Jacobin thinkers. Re-examining the argument developed in his initial texts (*Contribution* and *Le Procès de Socrate*) in which a certain asymmetry between "Jewish genius" and accomplished European and Western culture is evident (Pastori 2011: 58), Sorel saw at the source of Jewish history the germ of a degenerative tendency constantly destined to coagulate around intellectualism. Thus, by proposing a different reading, for example of Renan's monograph about Marcus Aurelius, he seemed to support the historical justification that Christianity stemmed from a re-fertilization of Judaism in a Semitic context (Sand 1984: 22–23). He also took on the distinction between Aryans and Semites that Renan had set down in the first chapter of the first book of the *Histoire du Peuple d'Israel* (Pastori 2011: 57–58), but he refrained to refer to any biological connotations.

However, after 1906 and the publication of the book on Renan, Sorel's judgements on the Jewish people changed even more. In *Les illusions du Progrès*, written two years later, there is a certain tendency to motivate

socialist sympathies within the Jewish high bourgeoisie to their marginal position in the productive sector. However, this tendency was strongly balanced with a net refusal of the biological value of such allegations in peculiar contrast with Guglielmo Ferrero (Simonetti 1972: 102–151; Furiozzi 1975: 30–355; Suppa 1998: 123–139). In an interview on the decline of Socialism, published in *Le Mouvement Socialiste*, Sorel argued that, in the event of a favourable turn of the tide for the Dreyfusards, many members of the Jewish financial world, from whom a certain support towards periodical magazines such as *L'Humanité* was expected (beginning with baron Rothschild), would begin to endorse other more "clerical" ideologies.[6] More importantly though, he increasingly emphasized the connection between the Dreyfusardian upper intellectual classes and the Jewish elites, attributing it to the common aim to neutralize the push for transformation in trade unionism in order to re-stabilize the hegemony of the bourgeoisie. An exemplary moment of this was the opposition shown to the ties between Jaurès' followers and some Jewish quarters that he exposed in an article in the same journal (*Les Juifs de "L'Humanité*), and in the letters he exchanged with Lagardelle. Sorel's open polemic vis-à-vis Jewish culture, with differing degrees and articulations, began in July, with the acquittal of Dreyfus.

The Dreyfus Affair and the Attack on New Jacobinism

As aforementioned, for Sorel, the political use of the Dreyfus affair confirmed the Jacobin ascent of the French state, contrary to the promises made by the Dreyfusards. The proletariat had been mobilized with the assurance of democratic equality, to then be dispersed to pave the way for a new democratic state based on bourgeois domination (Gervasoni 1997: 169–193). Sorel's change in attitude towards Judaism must be tied firstly to the disillusionment with the limits of class intervention within a socialist movement, which was integrated into the circuit of political democracy (Gervasoni 1997: 208–210). Besides, in July 1906, *Le Mouvement Socialiste*, a journal with which Sorel regularly collaborated and which drew its main source of inspiration from him, published an article by Louzon, in which the end of the Dreyfus affair was seen as a judicial *coup d'état* thanks to which the Jewish people could gain influence as a social

[6] Sorel, Georges. 1906. Le Dèclin du Parti socialiste international. *Le Mouvement Socialiste*, February: 195.

class, rather than a religious community (Louzon 1906: 193–199). Because of this, Sorel began to talk of an actual offensive led by the Jewish party with Lagardelle and Croce, seen as a campaign aimed at smearing periodicals like the one in question, and orchestrated in agreement with Jaurès' supporters. Furthermore, in his various letters, the antisemitic references multiplied and culminated with the claim that the Judaism was unaware of its own cultural and religious foundations (Petrucci 1984).

However, in a letter to Daniel Halévy, the traditional figure of the "wandering Jew" was once again seen in a positive light for the possibility of redemption that it offered from a linear and progressive view of history. Sorel stated:

> The experience of this great epoch shows quite clearly how a goodhearted man can find enough satisfaction to conserve his fervour in the fighting sentiment that accompanies this *will of redemption*. I believe that from this story one can find illustrious examples in favour of what you said: the legend of the wandering Jew is the symbol of the highest aspirations of mankind, condemned to march forever without finding a moment to rest. (Gervasoni 1997: 28–36, 162–168; Pastori 2011: 140–41, 46)[7]

In 1908, after the suspension of the worker's revolt in Villeneuve-Saint Georges and in Droveil wanted by Clemenceau, the Home Secretary of the Dreyfusard government, and supported by the Socialist Party, Sorel acknowledged the conclusion of the socialist trajectory, as well as the decay of efficient and reactionary activity in trade unionism. From this moment on, Sorel distanced himself from "Le Mouvement", and from Lagardelle. He favoured an aristocratic regime based on community, to a democracy with a Jacobin blueprint, which he saw growing stronger through the assimilation of the socialist ranks. This would renew his ties, in truth never lost, with conservatives (Petrucci 1984), an in particular with Hyppolite Taine (Gervasoni 1997: 28–36, 162–168; Pastori 2011: 40–46) (with all the consequences: suffice to think about the issue of the relationship with positivism). An initial symptom of Sorel's 'volte-face' can be seen in his choice in September 1908 to give Valois (with whom he had formed a strong relationship) and Gilbert the famous interview on the pro-Ferrer upheavals, published in *l'Action Française*, in which, while noting the weak trust that the French people had in the monarchy, he mentioned the

[7] Georges Sorel to Daniel Halévy, 15th of July 1907 in Sorel 1963: 97.

possibility of an encounter between trade unionism and monarchic reactionaries. Besides Sorel's denouncing of the intrinsic push towards degeneration present in democracy, the two nationalist intellectuals had been encouraged to request the interview because of the publication of the pamphlet *La Révolution Dreyfusienne*, reprinted *ne variateur* in 1911 (Germinario 1995: 10).[8] This text was born from the reading of *Histoire de l'affaire Dreyfus* by Reinach, and in it, determining a radical shift in comparison to some affirmations that can be found in texts such as *Réflexions*, Sorel reinforced Renan's idea of Revolution, and attacked the model of modern revolutions. His argument was that revolutions inevitably break out in democratic countries, spreading the decadent and levelling behaviour of a mediocre political and intellectual class (Germinario 1995: 10–11; Sand 1984: 29–30). Sorel recalled the role of an article written by Louzon in 1906 in *Le Mouvement Socialiste*, and considered indicative the choice of censoring the title on the cover of the review because of the alarm surrounding the "triumph of the Jewish party". To Sorel, attaining a real revolutionary objective after the crisis of values caused by democracy seemed impractical, once this had "become aware of its own strength" (Sorel 1909: 47–63). In this respect, the Dreyfus affair was exemplary. This impression persisted until the rise of Bolshevism, and motivated his invigorated and explicit proximity to the nationalist-reactionary cultural world, and the opening to *l'Action Française* (Germinario 1995: 11). Such opening coincided with Sorel's denunciation, initially in personal correspondences, of the political role that the Jewish people held as a "professional persecuted people", a role fed by the encounter between particularism and messianism (Sand 1984: 26–29).

Sorel's appreciation of Gohier, the former Dreyfusard turned into an antisemitic activist,[9] and most importantly the revision of his own opinion on the ties between Judaism and the revolutionary spirit in relation to the arguments forwarded by Bernard Lazare, is indicative in this respect. Discussing the reconstruction of Reinach had given the French

[8] An indication of the success of this text was, among other things, in Italy, the proposed intention of dedicating a special issue of the magazine La Voce to the subject "Semites and anti-Semites", which was meant also to include a contribution by Sorel on Drumont - as can be deduced from a letter from Alessandro Casati to Prezzolini dated February 1910. I thank Prof. Giovanni Rota for this indication.

[9] Sorel, Georges. 1912. Urban Gohier. *L'Indépendance*, January: 305–320; Id. 1912. Quelques prétentions juives. *L'Indépendance*, May: 277–295; Id. 1912. Aux temps dreyfusiens. *L'Indépendance*, October: 29–59.

philosopher the occasion to see in it an attempt to justify an initiative, characterized by an exquisitely anti-nationalist sentiment, in a revolutionary perspective. Sorel promoted an interpretation of antisemitism as a necessary antidote to this sentiment, that he believed to be generated in the Jewish intellectual sector. The texts that appeared in May and June 1906 in the conservative periodical *L'Indépendence* stressed this point, going as far as declaring the monarchists as the only political group truly alien to manoeuvres made by the "Jewish party" (Sand 1984: 29–30; Gervasoni 1997: 367–369).

The political consequences of such an orientation can be recognized in Sorel's proposed, and never accomplished project for the periodical *Cité Française*, that he made with Valois, an exponent of antisemitic conservative Social-populism (Gervasoni 1997: 367–369). Their programme was laid down in 1910 with a special *Déclaration*, whose core was the aversion to the degeneration of the bourgeois culture. However, Sorel was more drawn to traditional conservatism, within which he identified the antidote and the most efficient response to the democratic-Jacobin culture, and to the new aristocracy that expressed it. This is the reason for the collaboration, from March 1911, with the periodical *L'Indépendance*, in which Sorel approached the Jewish question without indulging in biological theories, and, unlike on other occasions, he did not highlight the ties between Judaism and financial capitalism. Instead, he focussed on the anti-national value of the "separator" attitude, combined and corresponding to the democratic "cover" of the "enlightened" use of power from above, exercised by the Jacobin party and their heirs, that he recognized in the Jewish elites. He even exhorted the wisest Jews to silence their intellectuals. These ideas returned in his October 1912 review of a book written by antisemitic journalist Henri de Bruchard, a journalist of *L'Aurore*, in which he connected Jewish separatism to their cosmopolitanism and identity. These two aspects were seen as products of messianism, now considered a fundamental characteristic of Jewish heritage, traceable to Jewish intellectuals, who thought of themselves as ready to replace Jacobinism.

Oscillations and Realignment

At the beginning of 1913, Sorel ended his collaboration with *L'Indépendance*, after siding with the political right. However, afterwards, his positions began to oscillate and realign (Sand 1984: 32–33). For example, in May 1914 he wrote to his friend Bordeau, asserting that he

rejected the historical foundations of Sombart's idea of the Bible as the "book" of a rural population, and recalled the comparison made by Taine between the Scottish peasants and the Jews. Four years later, however, after reading Michels' volume on political parties, Sorel became sceptical once again of the link he had heretofore posited between the Judaic spirit and the revolutionary push. For example, in an erroneously dated article published posthumously on *The Liberal Revolution* by Gobetti,[10] Sorel reflected on the Tharaud brothers' book on the Hungarian question. He underlined that whereas in Italy and France Jews had been substantially assimilated, in Germany and Hungary they insisted on a separatist position, adopting a particularist and seditious conduct. He observed:

> It is certainly difficult to understand the role that the Jews played during the revolutions that caused so many ruins in Central Europe. The Israeli families that were zealously engaged in industrial affairs or in studies should not be confused with their Russian or Polish counterparts. In France and in Italy, during the Middle Ages, Jews were generally assimilated with the locals. But in Germany and Hungary there are only distant analogies between the Jews, whose ambition is diabolical, and the ancient inhabitants of the German kingdoms. It was in Germany that Judaism took on provocative and impudent attitudes.[11]

Despite his enthusiasm for the Russian Revolution, which is summarized in *Plaidoyer pour Lenin*, contained in the Appendices of the fourth edition of the *Réflexions*, Sorel did not appreciate the impulse and consequences of the revolutionary movements in Central Europe. He saw the Jews who rejected assimilation as one of the catalysts of these movements. In fact, he eschewed opposing the presence of the Jewish people *tout court*, but considered their assimilation necessary. Otherwise their tendency to try to rule independently, a tendency already seen in Jewish intellectuals, would be inevitable.

This evaluation would become susceptible to different asymmetrical and conflicting turns. In an article on Zionism, published in November 1920 in *Il Resto del Carlino*, he dropped the accusation of fanaticism of the Zionist movement. In fact, the prospect of a Jewish return to Palestine was seen as an opportunity to establish its double legal status, considered

[10] The original article, which was published in French, was actually dated 12 October 1922.
[11] Sorel, Georges. 1923. Quand Israel est roi. *La Rivoluzione Liberale*, 5: 18.

analogous to the affiliation between Catholics and the Vatican, rather than the expression of a mere separatist initiative.

> There are many analogies between Zionism and the regime that the Catholic clergy has to bow to in countries that conserve diplomatic relations with the Vatican, even though the Church remains separate from the state. If there are any difficulties arising between the clergy and secular administrations, the messenger relays his report to the Holy See, and the differences are solved through diplomacy. […] Liberal philosophy, so bold when fighting Vatican doctrines, feels insecure when facing serious Israelite agitation.[12]

Certainly, the Zionist request for a similar double status was part of the strategy undertaken by "rich and powerful Zionists" (Batault 1921), but was considered with less worried tones compared to other identity claims.

In 1921, towards the end of his life, Sorel reviewed Batault's book on the rebirth of antisemitic sentiment and their historical and ideological motivation, and based on the ambiguous parallel between Zionism and Protestantism (taken from Sombart's 1911 *Die Juden und das Wirtschaftsleben*), and he contested the book's claim to justify the English (and American) position on the Jewish question. Among all the possible variants of Judaic "separatism", Sorel considered almost neutrally the prospect of Zionist relocation under the aegis of the English protectorate, which was orchestrated on a cultural and spiritual front. However, not all of his declarations as a mature thinker went in a similar direction. In an article written on *La Révue Communiste*, as his support for the Bolshevik initiative waved, he resumed the controversial discussion with Batault, and once again refuted the connection between Judaism and the revolutionary spirit. Moreover, he attributed the birth of the Zionist project to an expansionist program led by England, with its directional epicentre in Jerusalem, contrary to any genuinely revolutionary project. Therefore, Sorel not only showed his respect for Judaism, but he even declared himself favourable to some specific stances held by Zionism. He recognized the Jerusalem Synagogue's capacity to act as a para-state vis-à-vis the United Nations after the treaty of Versailles, to expose antisemitic discrimination cases (Sand 1984: 35–36).

[12] Sorel, Georges. 1920. *Il Sionismo. Il Resto del Carlino*, November 5.

Conclusions

In the controversial antisemitic phases, with different intensity and connotation, Sorel's aversion towards Judaism was of a sectorial nature, not a mere racist attack, criticizing Jewish inclination towards an affiliation with the bourgeoisie and its lifestyle. According to him, Jews *de facto* converted to the religion of that class, promoting some of its crucial agents (Petrucci 1984: 194–195). He wrote to Croce in January 1919 that "there is a need […] for caution vis-à-vis the enormous role the Jews play today in the world. The Jews are the real example of the revolting bourgeoisie" (Sorel 1980: 266).

In order to put forward some conclusive considerations, it is useful to recall how Gramsci, who paid particular critical attention to Sorel, observed in *Quaderni*, around 1930–1932:

> I believe that one cannot see Sorel as a 'revolutionary intellectual' without considering France after 1870. In fact, between 1870 and 1871 France went through two terrible defeats: a national one that weighed heavily on intellectuals and political figures, generating men like Clemenceau who was the quintessence of French Jacobinism, and the defeat of the Parisian people of the Commune, that weighed heavily on revolutionary intellectuals and created the anti-Jacobin Sorel. His curious anti-historical anti-Jacobinism […], is the outcome of the popular blood-spill of 1871. (Gramsci 1975: 420–421)

The anti-historical characteristic of Sorel's critique of Jacobinism identified by Gramsci was indeed antisemitic. This explains the anti-political current constantly found in the various, often oscillating and incoherent, stances that Sorel formulated. The lack of historicity in his overall position expanded when dealing with the Jewish question, and his sophisticated social diagnosis evident in his anti-progressivism, was crushed and obfuscated by this attitude.

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Corrupter of the Working Class. Italian Revolutionary Syndicalism and Antisemitic Critics of Democracy

Enrico Serventi Longhi

Introduction

This chapter intends to reconstruct the reception of antisemitism in Italian revolutionary syndicalism (Tarquini 2019, Toscano 2003, Catalan 2003, Germinario 1999, Miccoli 1997). The history of this important group of the Italian labor movement is limited to a relatively brief period in the twentieth century, corresponding to about a decade (1904–1914) (Volpe 2015, Riosa 1976). Its nature is not understandable without connecting it to the history of the trade-union movement in France, which provided the model for the insurrectional and anti-statist culture in Italy, along with the criticism of the gradualist and reformist dogmatism of official socialism. The revolutionary revision of Italian socialism, driven by trade union leaders Arturo Labriola and Enrico Leone, intended to put the workers' movement at the center of modernity, aiming to push it even deeper into the capitalistic contradictions and into its own lines of development. The

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workers' movement was not just a mere antithesis to the capitalist system, but rather it would become a vital and dynamic protagonist of historical-social progress (D'Alterio 2011, Gianinazzi 1989, Marucco 1971).

A study of the existence and persistence of antisemitic prejudices in the Italian revolutionary trade unions must take into account the link with the French movement and the evolution of antisemitism during the previous century. During the nineteenth century, "the anti-Jewish archive", the repertoire on which antisemitic discourse was built and renewed over the centuries, crystallized into what has been defined as "social antisemitism": the identification of the Jew with capitalist exploitation (Levis Sullam 2008).

Social antisemitism entered the twentieth century after having contaminated various cultural and political environments, from utopian socialism to social Christianity, from Blanquism to reactionary nationalism. The encounter with French revolutionary syndicalism was almost unavoidable. Social antisemitism resulted, in the particular climate following the Dreyfus Affair, in left-wing political antisemitism, aimed directly against the triumphant democracy (Dreyfus 2009, Sand 1984, Fraisse 1983, Silberner 1953). According to Georges Sorel and other syndicalist thinkers, such as Hubert Lagardelle and Robert Louzon, the Jews polluted the workers' movement through compromise, opportunism and bourgeois collaborationism (Battini and Bonucci 2010, Luzzatto Voghera 2007).

Equidistance and Anti-politics

The left-wing anti-Dreyfus controversy reverberated quite quickly even through Italy, where it was clear that the attacks against reformist socialism and Masonic radicalism contained a precise antisemitic character (Germinario 1995). Hubert Lagardelle, in one of his letters, expressed regret to Robert Michels for not being able to pay him for his articles written for the magazine *Mouvement Socialiste*, complaining about the poverty of the French syndicalist magazines, especially when compared with *L'Humanitè* by Jaurés, which was backed by "billionaire Jews" (Volpe 2008: 232). Michels noted with a humorous tone how strong the hostility towards the Jews was in French revolutionary syndicalism. In a note to the critical apparatus of his correspondence with Sorel, Michels evocatively described the intense antisemitic sentiment of the philosopher:

> He is extremely intransigent, intolerant and *cassant* (too much for my taste). He is deeply suspicious about the Jews, as he is also deeply suspicious of the idealists, whom he considers dangerous people and bloodthirsty beyond all

> political necessity (and in this case he quotes the Jacobins of the French Revolution). He especially blames Jewish capitalist internationalism. (…) I'm impressed by Sorel's excellent Catholic ground. He often hurls himself at the *impurs*, at the *petits-maitres* du Bal Tabarin, at the *enjoleurs de femmes*, and declares himself firmly in favor of premarital—male and female—chastity, as, in his opinion, final victory in civil and political struggles smiles always to the purest, most focused, most ethical of the social classes (Volpe 2008, 258).

Sorel's "excellent Catholic ground" was at the root of his ethical rectitude and, at least in part, of the fascination he exercised over the German-Italian economist. Michels, moreover, underlined the philosopher's antisemitism, without translating his notes into particular political positions (Bonnell 2019). Sorelian antisemitism gathered more support in other areas of revolutionary syndicalism. Agostino Lanzillo began to spread antisemitic ideology when Sorel's pamphlet *La Revolution Dreyfusenne* was distributed. As Lanzillo wrote, commenting on Sorel's writing, the Dreyfus Affair was "the triumph of Masonic Jewish democratic sectarianism". This triumph was possible through the subordination of the working class, which would only later understand the need to separate from the bourgeoisie. Revolutionary syndicalism remained the only bulwark against democratic corruption, which aimed to distract and absorb the workers' movement by flooding it with Jewish politicalism: from libertarians to anti-clericals, from reformists to Jacobins, from the radicals to the socialists, all should keep their hands off the working class.[1]

Lanzillo not only intended to pay tribute to Sorel, but also to embrace and re-launch a precise anti-democratic line hostile to both the financial powers, and to the politics of compromise and moderation prevalent in Italy. From Lanzillo's point of view, the strategy of integrating the working class operated by democratic groups seemed successful in this country as well.

The Italian anti-Democratic strategy had to be strengthened and coordinated with the French, and antisemitism could be the best way, since it could connect the campaign on both sides of the Alps against the menace of a capitalist-Jewish international plot. A few months later, Sorel again informed Lanzillo that he had proposed to Enrico Leone to take care of the Jews infesting Italian socialism:

[1] Lanzillo, Agostino. 1910. Vita proletaria. L'attuale momento del proletariato in Francia. *Il Divenire Sociale*, December 31.

> I asked Leone why the Divenire does not take advantage of the Treves-Labriola controversy to expose the reformist socialist business; Treves is a Jew, like Luzzatti; one could thus write of "Judaism in socialism" as Wagner wrote of "Judaism in art". There is, I think, an enormous interest in stepping up the attack on these quacks.[2]

In May 1910, Sorel returned to this topic hoping Lanzillo and Leone would also involve Arturo Labriola. Sorel believed that Jews in Italy, as in France, were "creating a new economic system that may have a great future" (ibid.). Labriola refused to write antisemitic articles or pamphlets, and, in response to Lanzillo's solicitations, criticized in depth the positions of Sorel in the Introduction to Edouard Drumont's booklet, *Catholic Socialism*, translated in Italian in 1911. The essay of the Catholic and antisemite French writer, appreciated in France by both socialist and trade unionist circles, was, according to Labriola, a striking example of the penetration of antisemitism to the left. What worsened this was the overlap of this attitude with an unacceptable economic analysis, overestimating the role of the financial system in social relations. The core of capitalism was as always, as Labriola wrote, industrial production. Benoit Malon, editor of *Revue Socialiste*, and some representatives of trade unionism, appreciated Drumont's broader view of rigid Marxism, capable of grasping both the cultural and the speculative aspects of a capitalist system. However, it was equally true that the vast majority of the French socialist movement, while discussing these theses, had remained immune from them. Starting from these considerations, Labriola noted how political antisemitism could be able to find consensus among small business owners, peasants and shopkeepers, but could not become the hinge of the revolutionary struggle of the working class (Labriola 1911: 5).

In Labriola, despite the criticism of social antisemitism as a key to the understanding of capitalism, there was no clear political condemnation. Certainly, the issue was substantially marginal in his thought. The underlying reasons for political antisemitism were understood and justified, as were a pre-political and anti-scientific tendency, and a spontaneous anti-democratic sentiment. Moreover, Labriola himself noted that if Drumont's intellectual horizon had remained confined to reactionary antisemitism, then other antisemites like Auguste Chirac and Gustave Rouanet would have finally moved towards socialism. According to Labriola, in

[2] Georges Sorel to Agostino Lanzillo, February 1st, 1910 (as cited in Germinario 1995: 105).

conclusion, there was no contradiction between a naive but sincere antisemitic spirit and a mature and more adequate revolutionary syndicalist orientation.

Political antisemitism was only a disease in revolutionary syndicalism, but it was not an enemy of it, nor was it contradictory to its values. In this perspective, other syndicalists grasped the revolutionary side of the antisemitic narrative. In 1911 Alceste De Ambris, perhaps the main revolutionary trade unionist leader, wrote on *Pagine Libere* that French finance was largely directed by Jews. For this reason, a proletarian antisemitic sentiment was absolutely understandable. At the same time, however, De Ambris judged as equivalent, the "baptized exploiter and the banker circumcised in the flesh", and therefore social antisemitism was substantially useless. He believed that at the beginning of the century, while Catholicism was in great decline, the workers, after the Dreyfus case, should mostly worry about challenging the "democrats", who were ready to protect the interests of the bourgeois Jews and to forget those of the working class:

> The democratic, Masonic, socialist intellectualism that, at the time of the Dreyfus affair, appealed to the plebeian muscle against the antisemitic *cravache*, then left its ally in the plague, and was not moved at all when the bourgeois raged against the proletarian avant-gardes.[3]

Even if the European working class "a few years ago was pro-Semitic because it saw the Jew as the persecuted, the victim, their companion in social injustice," they now had to remain extraneous to the conflict between antisemites and pro-Semites, and concentrate their efforts against bourgeois democracy.[4]

Paolo Orano's Antisemitism

Labriola and De Ambris were two different, but in some ways similar, protagonists of this ambiguous equidistance between antisemites and pro-Semites. They were expressions of the prevalent attitude in revolutionary syndicalism circles. But in the same period another theorist of revolutionary syndicalism, Paolo Orano, decidedly took the side of the anti-Jewish front. His intellectual biography is quite interesting, helping to grasp the

[3] De Ambris, Alceste. 1911. L'antisemitismo alla riscossa. *Pagine libere*, March 15.
[4] Ibid.

spread of antisemitic mentality in Italian culture at the beginning of the century. During his formative years, Orano was attracted to modernism and the new sciences (psychology and anthropology) referring to a heterogeneous group of positivist thinkers such as Cesare Lombroso, Guglielmo Ferrero and Enrico Ferri. Having graduated with a thesis on Marxism under the supervision of Antonio Labriola, in 1898 Orano was initiated in the Freemasonry, where his studies found fertile ground.

In his early 20s, he had published an essay on Sardinian social structures and customs, based on a racial vision. Orano, however, still used the term race as a relative concept, influenced more by the social psychology of Gabriel Tarde and Gustave Le Bon than by the pseudo-scientific racial theories already circulating in Europe (Orano 1896). His subsequent work focused on the history of Christianity and developed the concept of Latinity, considering it a necessary condition for progress of humanity in opposition to the immobility of Eastern religions. The dichotomy between Judaism and Christianity was the fruit of different mentalities: Oriental, messianic, rationalist and wait-and-see for Judaism, and Latin, vital, authoritarian and dynamic for Christianity (Orano 1898).

Scholarly debate on Judaism began to affect leftist political action. Between 1904 and 1905, Orano's political militancy became more intense. Speeches, courses at the "Università Popolare" and at the "Circolo di Studi Sociali", and electoral campaigns revealed him as one of the most brilliant and effective speakers and writers of the new socialist generation. Orano, however, continued to be both attracted to and rejected by Judaism, considering it a mirror of human contradictions. He was an *Avanti!* reporter covering the inauguration of the Israelite Temple in July 1904. The description of the environment that surrounded him was a catalogue of the stereotypes about poor Jews:

> A big old woman with a red face, a girl with very big black eyes, fixed in the pallor of her thin face under a gloomy helmet of hair; two barefoot urchins, bristly and woolly; an old surly man, hooked with dazzling eyes full of experience and foresight, shouted; they approached and almost attacked each other by breaking the lullaby chant with cries, with blasphemies, with voices of affliction. And they all denied to each other, the husband to his wife, two brothers to each other and everyone to the father and mother, to the parents and to the children, counting the painful day's little and multiple profit, in their hearts certain that there would be enough gold for the temple. (Orano, Paolo. 1904. Roma israelita. *Avanti!*, July 29)

He was surrounded by a "noisy, bothersome, querulous, screaming, miserable, fetid hive, in that laceration of Rome uncertain of itself and its past". The Synagogue opening was an opportunity to consider the Jewish commercial spirit, which would not have been the consequence of medieval repression, but, as Orano explained, of "the law of financial ascension of the Jewish lineage". The Jewish race was a rebel against law and the state, but not against meditation and richness:

> Before us, in this society of ours where today the strange dome of aluminum of the major Roman Temple of Israel shines under the fierce sun, are the two main expressions of the Jewish heritage. The resistance to Western oppression has its absolute prototype in the billions of Rothschild, the grandson of the one who serenely refused (…) the title of king of the Jews and contented himself with being the Jew of kings, aiming for the conquest of government powers, of the public opinion through the bourgeois press, and of wealth and credit through banking and large industrial systems. At the same time, they pursue maximum intellectual ascent by critiquing down to its roots the forms of our state, using the technical research of those social instruments that can eliminate the unbalance and the misery—Marx—and of the physical-psychic conditions to save society from infection of murder—Lombroso.[5]

Judaism could serve the emancipation of humanity only by abandoning its religious and ethnic spirit, and becoming materialistic and universal. Orano suggested an assimilationist position, which did reaffirm the stereotypes that still marked the poor Jews (beggars, dirty, junk dealers, etc.), but which, recognizing the higher level of Jewish heritage, also attracted the sympathy of some educated members of the community. A profound scholar of Talmudic science, Raffaele Ottolenghi, who was formerly a diplomat in the Middle East, and one of the most original figures of Italian Jewry, praised Orano's initiative by dedicating one of his works to the young socialist (Ottolenghi 1913: 6–8). Ottolenghi was one of the Italian Jewish intellectuals interested in preserving the religious and cultural identity of the Semitic tradition, and who had had started a close discussion with Gentiles on the Jewish origin of Christianity, and on the significance of ethnic and religious background in determining social behavior. Ottolenghi defended the Jewish civilization in *Avanti!* from atheist and rationalist critics such as Carlo Basilici and Giovanni Bonagiuso, who

[5] Ibidem.

attacked all religions and emphasized the substantial continuity between Judaism and Christianity. For Ottolenghi, Judaism was irreducible to Christianity, which had been aryanized, westernized, and paganized, losing contact with ancient Eastern wisdom (Di Porto 2014: 521–522).

Ottolenghi shared with Orano the dualistic scheme of a Jewish conscience opposing it to Christian history. The merit of the young socialist scholar was that of putting the historical, political, and economic role of Judaism at the center of his reflection, regardless of every positive or negative connotation he could give to Talmudic tradition. Orano and Ottolenghi shared the same dislike for rationalism and atheism, both unable to grasp the religious nature of historical development.

Interest in the Jewish question remained strong for Orano, while he was still relegated to his scholarly studies. His young political experience in the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) was free from explicit antisemitism. He followed the maximalist group of Enrico Ferri, progressively distancing himself from the Masonic universe. He brought out his exuberant and controversial character, as in the case of a series of articles, *I 508 moribondi di Montecitorio*, published in the socialist *Avanti!* for several weeks between 1904 and 1905. This was an anti-parliament and anti-Masonic review, in which the elements of criticism of democracy he developed later were presented for the first time. The controversies generated by these articles—especially by Republicans and Freemasons, but also by moderate members of his party—cost him public disputes and physical assaults, but did not curb his polemical spirit, and pushed him even further away from the democratic world.

In 1907, Orano's severance from the PSI and the *Avanti!* was brought about by discomfort for the incurably democratic nature of the Party's majority, especially after the growth of reformist tendency. Orano embraced revolutionary syndicalism as the outcome of an intellectual journey that had led him to seek anti-rationalism, vitalism, and dynamism even outside traditional boundaries (D'Alterio 2017). He founded a new magazine, *La Lupa*, to serve as a theoretical renewal of the revolutionary movement: it was the time to definitively abandon rationalist sophistry and be ready to approach other political cultures, such as nationalism or political Catholicism, which had already started their own ideological redefinition (Sternhell, Sznajder and Asheri 1994: 66, Perfetti 1972: 93, Santarelli 1965: 50–51).

On 16 October 1910, Orano inaugurated his magazine with the plan to seal the alliance between revolutionary syndicalism and nationalism

through a criticism of democracy. Almost immediately, he made antisemitism a signature language that could bring together the seemingly irreducible universes of nationalism and revolutionary syndicalism. As he wrote: "I have noted that the Jewish and Masonic claims disperse and extinguish the characters of the Latin spirit in Italy which I, a revolutionary syndicalist, feel, nourish and watch over in myself".[6] The "Jewish triad", composed by Ernesto Nathan (first Jewish mayor of Rome), Luigi Luzzatti (at the time Prime Minister of Italy), and Carlo Treves (Jewish PSI leader), was at the center of his attacks, and the emblem of the new democracy generated by the alliance between Judeo-Masonic capitalism and socialism that needed to be fought.[7] The "Triad" was considered the tip, "more than one believes and without them knowing, of a sort of Jewish imperialism", which aimed at the conquest of the State administration. Democracy itself, in fact, as the French case had shown, was "a Jewish weapon", which had the corruption of the national working class as one of its main objectives. It was to be opposed as "an anti-Jewish and anti-Giolitti bloc composed of trade unionists, nationalists and Catholics, and supported by ecclesiastical hierarchies".[8]

The Jewish question became a real obsession in Orano's newspaper. On the columns of *La Lupa* Raffaele Ottolenghi was hosted several times, and was entrusted with four-column articles on Jewish culture. Only later Ottolenghi understood the change occurred in the positions of Orano, which surpassed historical criticism of Judaism and led to open antisemitism.[9] Finally, Ottolenghi knew he was being used by Orano to justify the incompatibility between Judaism and modernity, as between democracy and working-class interests. The alarm Dante Lattes had sent out earlier about the infiltration of antisemitism in the syndicalist currents—making explicit reference to *La Lupa*—became increasingly relevant within the Jewish cultural universe.[10]

La Lupa was a real antisemitic laboratory, open to different voices and characterized by the will to widen the boundaries of revolutionary propaganda. Other syndicalists started to use the language of antisemitism as

[6] Orano, Paolo. 1910. La salvezza del principio. *La Lupa,* November 13.

[7] Orano, Paolo. 1910. Socialismo in margine. *La Lupa*, October 30.

[8] Diotallevi, Giovanni. 1910. Il dibattito sul sindacalismo e il nazionalismo. L'evoluzione di Giorgio Sorel. *La Lupa*, November 6.

[9] Ottolenghi, Raffaele. 1911. Sindacalismo antisemita. *La Settimana Israelitica*, April 7. La lupa che si morde. 1911. *La Settimana Israelitica*, July 21.

[10] Lattes, Dante. 1911. Sindacalismo antisemit. *Corriere Israelitico*, April 30.

well. Paolo Mantica, who was interested in the unionization of the middle classes, lashed out against the abnormal presence of Jews in professions, especially in medicine.[11] Libero Tancredi, aka Massimo Rocca, reflecting on the conflict between libertarian and State pedagogy, identified in Francisco Ferrer's execution the conspiracy of the Freemasonry with Jewish lobbies interested in secularizing and centralizing education.[12]

Orano solidified a new antisemitic alliance with nationalists and conservative Catholics, providing an unlikely basis of consensus for the colonial war in Libya. The first period of war was characterized by a new wave of antisemitism on the part of nationalists. Nationalist Francesco Coppola openly denounced a Jewish conspiracy against Italian efforts and spoke of a "gold war" against blood rights.[13] His article attracted criticism not only from the Jewish press, but also from many nationalists and ultimately had no success. The adhesion of a large part of the Italian Jewish community to the war effort led to a general cooling off of the antisemitic tones (Battini 2010a: 113–114, Toscano 2003: 44–45, Gaeta 1981: 275–276).

The Revolutionary War

Even in the syndicalists' circles, Orano's antisemitic positions finally proved to be outnumbered. The same antidemocratic campaign was overcome in 1913, as Labriola and De Ambris stood for election in the first vote in Italian history since universal suffrage had been implemented. Labriola's approach to democratic circles was based on common anticlerical sentiment, and his late adherence to the Freemasonry, while De Ambris declared his to be a sort of protest candidacy, as a way of returning to Italy, resulting in prolonged persecutions from the police.

Only a few leaders like Lanzillo pledged to keep the purely anti-Democratic features of the revolutionary syndicalist doctrine, defining the choice of his comrades as political "intoxication" (Antonioli 1990: 79–81). De Ambris answered to Lanzillo with a controversial note that confirmed the change, but also showed the persistence of some antisemitic stereotypes. Lanzillo was another intellectual who was born:

[11] Mantica, Paolo. 1911. Soddisfatti? *La Lupa*, July 2.

[12] Tancredi, Libero (Massimo Rocca). 1911. La verità su Francesco Ferrer. *La Lupa*, August 20.

[13] Coppola, Francesco. 1911. Israele contro l'Italia (lettera aperta a Charles Maurras). *L'Idea Nazionale*, November 16.

> to remind us of the "sacred canons" of syndicalism that would prevent the working class from dealing with the institutional problems (…) we should isolate ourselves in the messianic expectation of the "mythical" Sorelian General Strike: but above all, let us beware of unclean spirits! We are the Elects, the possessors of absolute truth, the very new Jews, and we must not admit the proximity of any Samaritan.[14]

In De Ambris' words, some prejudices were renewed, such as the vision of the Jew as that of a utopian or a mystic, unable to measure himself with the concrete problems of society and politics. Paradoxically, he derogatorily called Jews the anti-Democratic and dogmatic Sorelians who had more openly conveyed political antisemitism. Sorelians were the "very new Jews", incapable of understanding the logic of facts, and imposing an alliance with radical democratic groups. This transversal alliance grew larger right before the event that would upset the most European political life, Austria's declaration of war against Serbia.[15]

The antisemitic controversy, already weakened between 1912 and 1914, practically disappeared during the Great War, when national mobilization also involved the Italian Jews (Toscano 2003: 110). Only a few revolutionary syndicalists continued to use antisemitic tones. In 1915, Orano published a pamphlet where he asserted the right for a "class of producers who wants to win the war" to "affirm their existence", and assume "dignity of conqueror", to defeat the socialist idea of peace and the Jewish view of war as episodic and provisional (Orano 1915).

Orano turned the anti-German campaign again into antisemitism. He emphasized the Judaism of Karl Marx, who was considered the instigator of a plan of domination based on the "German proletarian race", and on "subversive Israelism". Orano juxtaposed Marx to Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, a real Latin revolutionary thinker (Orano 1917). Marx's racist mentality was an anti-German topic widespread in revolutionary syndicalism during the War, although devoid of the antisemitic character it had in Orano. Alceste De Ambris himself became the protagonist of an intense campaign to demolish the myth of the communist thinker and of German socialism (Serventi Longhi 2011: 79). The war did not simply end on 4 November 1918, but instead reverberated in Italian society by brutalizing and exacerbating political dialectics. After the War, the Italian

[14] De Ambris, Alceste. 1914. Postilla. *L'Internazionale*, July 11.
[15] De Ambris, Alceste. 1914. Ancora in tema di 'unità'. *L'Internazionale*, August 1.

revolutionary syndicalism parable closed, shattered by the outbreak of the conflict. The new social context imposed new political and ideological choices. As Orano again stated it was evident the war had become the permanent condition of a political struggle. It was necessary to thank above all the "anti-democratic Parisian laboratory", which affirmed the primacy of political violence: "Catholicism, syndicalism, monarchy and intellectual revolution were the striking points launched against the Republic and the Jewish lobby comfortably vegetating in the State" (Battini 2010b: 102–103).

The antisemitic accents returned in some cases around the campaign conducted by fascists, nationalists, and former syndicalists against peace negotiations. Antisemitism, as a criticism to liberal democracies corrupting the workers' movement, was transformed into a criticism of international democracy as a cause of oppression of proletarian nations (D'Annunzio 2005, De Felice 1993: 69–70).

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Antonio Gramsci and the Jewish Question

Andrea Pinazzi

The aim of this chapter is to investigate Antonio Gramsci's interest in the so-called Jewish question, and more specifically to explore whether the founder of what would become the biggest Communist Party in the West, had reflected on the topic beyond the epistolary comments he exchanged with Tatiana Schucht and Pietro Sraffa.

The chapter considers if Gramsci's thoughts on the matter went beyond the mere historical commentary, offering instead a deeper theorisation of the Jewish experience. Discovering the absence of such theorisation might in fact highlight not just the little interest that one of the Left's most significant thinkers had on the topic, but also the impossibility—or incapacity—of a universally-oriented ideology to truly engage with the specific.

Although the Jewish Question is not one of the main topics in Gramsci's work, nor one of the most studied, the analysis of the way he handle with this very theme is useful on different levels. On one hand the proximal relation he hold with the Jewish environment—his wife Iulca and his sister-in-law Tatiana came from a mixed family—is evident in some of his *Letters from Prison*, but the Jewish question happens to vanish in other points. But also for the role of cultural guide of the Italian Communist Party Gramsci will keep even during his detention. On the other hand, we

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cannot help but appreciate Gramsci's reflection on the Jewish world about a wide variety of nuances, from the traditional Catholic anti-Judaism, to the Marxian analysis of the Jewish question, to end with the lack of confrontation with the new problems posed by the advent of fascist antisemitism. All of these aspects must be kept in mind. We must consider how, in Gramsci's reflection, interpretative options stemming both from the Marxist tradition and from classic liberal positions—widespread in the Italian intelligentsia—are at work. Gramsci's thought on Jewish question is actually deeply influenced by Marx as well as by Arnaldo Momigliano and also by Benedetto Croce.

Therefore, we will primarily have to analyse Gramsci's dealing with traditional anti-Judaism, referring in particular to the correspondence with Tatiana about *Two Worlds* and emphasising the influence of Marx and Feuerbach on the development of Gramsci's thought on the theme. In a second phase, we will focus on Gramsci's lack of understanding of the antisemitic issue that was emerging within Fascism. It will thus become clear how Gramsci is involved not only in the Marxist cultural milieu, but also in typical positions of the Italian liberal intelligentsia. Finally, we will get through this very last aspect.

Gramsci's Interpretation of Traditional Anti-Judaism

In his writings, Gramsci referred to the Jewish question in very few occasions, which already reveals how his interest in the topic was secondary. Analysing closely the content of these few comments, it becomes apparent that they have an occasional character, connected to the rebuttal of episodes of antisemitism, rather being the consequence of Gramsci's understanding of the topic.

Even the translation of Marx's *Judenfrage*, published in the *Quaderni di Traduzioni* (*Translation Notebooks*) (Gramsci 2007: 794–799), says little about Gramsci's views on the subject, being primarily, if not exclusively, a linguistic exercise. If we were to take for granted the thesis of the Notebooks' editors that Gramsci had a limited knowledge of foreign languages, then the—minimal—variations in terms of vocabulary, and the implicit substantivisation of the title *Jewish Question* into *Question over the Jews*, are not to be given too much attention, as they would be the result of either a stylistic choice or translation mistakes (Gramsci 2007: 30–31).

Therefore, to analyse Gramsci's relationship with the Jewish world and the Jewish experience, the only departure point available is the discussion

with Tatiana mentioned earlier, of which I will now provide an overview. The discussion was based on *Two Worlds*, a 1930 British film, directed by Ewald André Dupont that was released in Italy in 1931. On the backdrop of World War I, the movie tells the story of the love story between an Austrian lieutenant and a Jewish girl. The movie, depicting the impossibility of communication between two very different universes, impressed Tatiana, who was partly Jewish on her mother's side. Feeling in between two worlds herself, she shared her feelings with Gramsci. Thus, an epistolary exchange on the topic began, lasting from autumn of 1931 until March 1932, to which, through Tatiana, Pietro Sraffa was also included (Izzo, 1993, 2012). In a letter dated 12 October 1931, Gramsci writes to Tatiana:

> Marx wrote that the Jewish question no longer exists since Christians have all become Jewish by assimilating what was the essence of Judaism, i.e., speculation, and that the solution of the Jewish question will occur when all of Europe is freed from speculation, that is, from Judaism in general (Gramsci 1994, vol. II: 85).[1]

And he adds, «This seems to me the only way to pose the general question». In these quotes Gramsci expands past Marx's position, while also strengthening the German thinker's conclusions. For Marx, the Jewish question was reabsorbed in the broader issues of human emancipation. Even if the Jews had reached emancipation in the transformation of Christians into Jews, it was nonetheless a "Jewishly" and impermanent

[1] See also §11 of Notebook 16 <text c>: «The Church is an even more implacable Shylock than Shakespeare's. It will demand its pound of flesh even if its victim will bleed to death, and with tenacity, always adapting its ways, it will reach its final purpose. To use Disraeli's expression, Christians are but the smartest of the Jews who have understood how to conquer the world. The Church cannot be reduced to its "normal" strength by refuting philosophically its theoretical postulates, or with Platonic affirmations of state (not militant) independence. This can only happen through everyday practical action, and with the celebration of all human creative forces from all social strata» (Gramsci 1975: 1872). About the Jews as speculators, see also the letter to Tatiana dated 4 November 1930, in which, despite declaring to not have read «Ford's book about the Jews» (the *International Jew*, a series of articles by Ford first published in 1920 on the «Deaborn Independent», and published in Milan in 1928) but stating to be aware of his perspective from other readings, Gramsci reduced Ford's antisemitism to a fight with finance: «the struggle against the Jews», he wrote, «is the sharpest aspect of his struggle against the plutocracy that has repeatedly to take over his industrial system» (Gramsci 1994, vol. I: 358).

emancipation, and a necessary step towards the emancipation of humankind itself (see Marx 1844a: 155, 165–169 and 1844b: 160, 170–174). Trapped in the iconic role of the speculator, the Jew represented a sociohistorical stage that needed to be surpassed, and he kept a dialectical role in the realm of the Spirit. However, Gramsci, unlike Marx, considered the matter resolved, and therefore not only repealed the peculiarity of the Jewish condition, like Marx already did, but he also negated that residue of spiritual existence that was left in the words of the philosopher from Trier.

Gramsci's adherence to Marx's views on the Jewish question is also evident in two letters he wrote to Iulca, dated 28 March and 11 April 1932, where he used the expression "sordidly Jewish" (schmutzig judisch) in three occasions (see Gramsci 1994, vol. II: 155–157, 161–162). This wording comes from the first of the *Thesis on Feuerbach*, in which Marx employed it to denote the utilitarian and selfish character of *praxis* as defined in *The Essence of Christianity*,[2] and more specifically in the chapter *The Significance of the Creation in Judaism*, where he states: «Utilism is the essential theory of Judaism. The belief in a special Divine Providence is the characteristic belief of Judaism; belief in Providence is belief in miracle; but belief in miracle exists where Nature is regarded only as an object of arbitrariness, of egoism, which uses Nature only as an instrument of its own will and pleasure […]. And all these contradictions of Nature happen for the welfare of Israel, purely at the command of Jehovah, who troubles himself about nothing but Israel, who is nothing but the personified selfishness of the Israelitish people, to the exclusion of all other nations,—absolute intolerance, the secret essence of monotheism» (Feuerbach 1957: 113–114).[3] The use of the expression "sordidly Jewish" by Gramsci is even more significant because of the private and intimate quality of the

[2] «Er [Feuerbach] betrachtet daher im Wesen des Christenthums nur das theoretische Verhalten als das echt menschliche, während die Praxis nur in ihrer schmutzig jüdischen Erscheinungsform gefaßt und fixiert wird» (Marx 1845a: 19); «In *Das Wesen des Christenthums*, he [Feuerbach] therefore regards the theoretical attitude as the only genuinely human attitude, while practice is conceived and defined only in its dirty-Jewish form of appearance» (Marx 1845b: 3).

[3] «Aber der *Utilismus* ist die wesentliche Anschauung des Judentums. Der Glaube an eine besondere göttliche Vorsehung ist charakteristicher Glaube des Judentums, der Glaube an die Vorsehung der Glaube an Wunder; der Glaube an Wunder aber ist es, wo die Natur nur als ein Objekt der Willkür, des Egoismus, der eben die Natur nur zu willkürlichen Zwecken gebraucht, angeschaut wird […]. Und alle diese Wirdernatürlichkeiten geschehen *zum Besten* Israels, lediglich auf *Befehl Jehovas*, der sich um nichts als Israel kümmert, nicht ist als

epistolary exchange with his wife. Gramsci described as «sordidly Jewish» the health issues that she was enduring, tracing them back to her everyday practical limitations, a «"metaphysical" error» that, according to Gramsci spoke of a «primordial "phase"» (Gramsci 1994, vol. II: 156–157) that Iulca needed to overcome, and that was caused by her «inferiority complex». The post-scriptum to the first letter is even more significant. Mindful of his exchange with Tatiana, Gramsci specified: «I hope that you will not misunderstand the expression "sordidly Jewish", which I have used above. I remark on this because recently Tania and I have an epistolary discussion about Zionism and I do not want to be considered "antisemitic" due to these words. But wasn't their author a Jew?» (Gramsci 1994, vol. II: 157).[4]

The expression «sordidly Jewish» recurs also in the *Prison Notebooks*, used to define the selfish and «sordidly Jewish» quality of Ugo Spirito's and the «Nuovi Studi di Diritto, Economia e Politica» group's ideas of the identification between the individual and the State (see Q10, part. II §7 in Gramsci 1975: 1245); but also to indicate the errors of Economism (see Q13, §18 in Gramsci 1975: 1595). Gramsci generally refers to a "sordidly Jewish" to portray every selfish or utilitarian attitude. This use derives not only from Feuerbach's influence, but also from an uncritical acceptance of traditional stereotypes. Thus, Gramsci not only declares his subscription to Marx's formulation of the Jewish question, but he also discloses his limited understanding of it. For Gramsci, the Jewish question is essentially a religious matter, and he regards prejudices against the Jews as a markedly pre-modern phenomenon. Pogrom and anti-Jewish persecutions for him are primarily, if not exclusively, connected to fading superstitions that are destined to disappear. Gramsci had his arguments to support such thesis, amongst which he mentioned sayings and linguistic conventions. I will provide two such examples. Referring to the 1920 Polish revolution, Gramsci wrote:

> These Cossacks did not have any Jews in their territory and thought of them in terms of the official and clerical propaganda as monstrous beings who had killed god. They refused to believe that the political commissar was a Jew:

die personifizierte Selbstsucht des israelitischen Volks, mit Ausschluß aller andern Völker, die absolute Intoleranz – das Geheimnis des Monotheismus» (Feuerbach 1973: 208).

[4] Even if Gramsci remarked in his letters to Iulca that he was not antisemitic, it is important to notice, like Enzo Traverso does, that «This insouciant language certainly shows how widespread and banal antisemitic stereotypes were in Italy at the beginning of the 1930s—under a still 'philo-Jewish' fascism» (Traverso 2018: 138).

> "you are one of us," they would say to him, "you are not a Jew, you are covered with scars from the wounds inflicted by Polish lances, you fight together with us; Jews are something else" (Gramsci to Tatiana, October 12, 1931 in Gramsci 1975, vol. II: 86).

Here, Gramsci's intention to demonstrate that antisemitism belongs to a rural and backward world, enclosed by the borders of village life, is evident. For him, as society progresses, anti-Jewish hatred is bound to vanish. The second example, also particularly indicative of his ideas, comes from Sardinian linguistic uses:

> In Sardinia too the Jew is thought of in various way; there is the expression *arbeu* that means a legendary monster of ugliness and evil; there is the Jew who killed Jesus Christ, but nevertheless there are good and bad "Jews," because the compassionate Niccodemus helped Mary take her son down from the cross. But for the Sardinian "the Jews" are not connected to the present time; if he is told that someone is a "Jew," he will ask whether this is like Niccodemus, but in general he believes it means bad Christian like those who demanded the death of Christ (Gramsci 1975: 86. See Canepa 1979: 262).

For Gramsci, therefore, anti-Jewish feelings are especially present in communities that do not have a direct knowledge of Jews, and where they are transformed into abstract symbols untethered to reality. As a consequence, Gramsci detaches the Jewish Question from the present—except from the aforementioned linguistic expressions—, relegating it to a past, and to a universe of beliefs and superstitions where the word "Jew" stands not for someone who belongs to a particular community or who is devoted to a specific religion, but rather an dehumanised Other. In this regard, it is interesting to read what Gramsci wrote in the first paragraph of *Notebook* 20: «Catholicism had a specific function, and traces of it remain in our language and ways of thinking, especially amongst villagers and farmers: Christian and Man are synonyms, or better, 'civilised man' and Christian are synonyms. (I am not a Christian! Then what are you, an animal?)», And he adds: «Perhaps this is also linked to the fact that in some countries, where Jews are not known, it is believed or it was believed that they had pig's tail and ears or other animalistic attributes» (Gramsci 1975: 2082–2083). For Gramsci, if, on the one hand, the Jewish condition is full of symbolism, on the other hand the status of the Jewish people is not clearly distinguishable from that of other minorities. Various examples of

this can be found in the *Prison Notebooks* in the form of parallelisms between the condition of the Jews and that of other oppressed people (African-Americans, Native Americans, and so on). For instance, in paragraph 49 of Notebook 4, he wrote: «America's niggers seem to have a negative racial and national spirit, the outcome of the struggle against whites that want to isolate and exploit them. Was this not the case for Jews too until the '700? *Liberia* […] could be the Sion of American niggers» (Gramsci 1975: 481).

The Lack of Understanding of Fascist Antisemitism

In a similar fashion, Gramsci thought that antisemitism was also a pre-modern phenomenon that belonged to the past, just like traditional prejudices against the Jews. He saw antisemitism as the outcome of religious convictions and leftover superstitions entangled with political agendas. In the *Notebooks*, Gramsci attributes antisemitic feelings to reactionary forces, and in Italy in particular he associated it to those social segments that resisted and fought national unification and the revolts of the Risorgimento. In paragraph 25 of Notebook 19, Gramsci refers specifically to those "reactionary and clerical" forces that «wanted to hold the Jews responsible for the liberal innovations of 1948» (Gramsci 1975: 2035). These ideas find confirmation in Italian national history, and they are a direct and explicit reference to the testimony of Raffaele Ottolenghi.[5] Another corroboration can also be found in Alfredo Panzini's *Life of Cavour*, which Gramsci deeply criticises as a "joke of history" in paragraph 32 of Notebook 23, where the author associates Carboneria and Masonry with Judaism (see Gramsci 1975: 2218–2226). Gramsci's severe criticism to the "little grandson of Father Bresciani"[6] strengthens the link between reactionary and conservative forces and antisemitism.

Gramsci's belief that the Jewish question belonged to a pre-modern world prevented him to read a specific antisemitic theme within Fascist ideology, an ideology that is in itself a very modern phenomenon. If it is

[5] Raffaele Ottolenghi (1860–1917), was a Jewish-born Italian diplomat, philanthropist and pacifist. He was a member of Italian socialist party and he collaborated with *Avanti!* and *Critica Sociale*. He committed suicide in 1917.

[6] «Grandsons of Father Bresciani» is a phrasing that Gramsci use to denote those writers, amongst which Panzini, who took inspiration from Jesuit Antonio Bresciani (1798–1862), who had authored the well-known antisemitic novel, *The Jew from Verona*, famous for its Church-related, anti-patriotic, and anti-Risorgimento rhetoric.

true that Gramsci, who passed away in 1937, never knew of the Italian racial laws of 1938, he was however aware of the Lateran Treaty of 1929. This Treaty had already induced a change in attitude towards Jews, and, in the 1930s, antisemitic tones had begun to make their appearances in Italian newspapers. In regard to this matter, it is useful to mention a discussion that Gramsci had with Piero Sraffa about *Two Worlds*. Gramsci wrote to Tatiana on 28 September 1931:

> There hasn't been any antisemitism in Italy for some time; Jews can become ministers (and even prime ministers like Luzzatti) and generals in the army; marriages between Jews and Christians are very numerous, especially in the cities, and not only in the lower classes but also between young ladies of the aristocracy and Jewish intellectuals. In what way does an Italian Jew (save for a small minority of rabbis and old barded traditionalists) differ from another Italian of the same class? He is much more different from a Polish or a Galician Jew of the same class (Gramsci 1994, vol. II: 79).

In these words, a theme is already present that will be further developed in Momigliano's review of Roth's *History of Jews in Venice*, that I will discuss in greater detail briefly. In this letter, the influence of Benedetto Croce's ideas is evident, as they had been developed in the *History of Italy*, and even more so in the Epilogue to the *History of Europe in the XIX Century*, which, published in instalments, was constituted as a unitary volume in the early 1932. What is most interesting here, however, is Sraffa's reply. In a letter to Tatiana that was meant for Gramsci, he wrote:

> In regards to *Two Worlds*, and I not intend to reopen this matter in your stead, you can tell him that I read his letter. What he claims about Jews in Italy is not entirely accurate anymore in this day and age. After the Lateran Treaty they surely received certain benefits, like religious communities under the juridical responsibility of the Israelite Universities, with tax imposing powers, etc. The old rabbis and the young Zionists are very happy about it. But at the same time they are excluded from many public offices. Jews do not enter the Royal Academy of Italy (some of them, Fascists, have been excluded despite their international fame), and they are also banned from the Chamber of Deputies, where the only Jew is Mr. Olivetti, the Secretary of the General Confederation of Italian Industry, and I am rather sure that it has been a good number of years since a Jew was made Senator […]. Both these tendencies, despite being polar opposites, actually aim to isolate the Jewish community again (Sraffa to Tatiana, 27th December 1931, in Sraffa 1991: 41–42).

Sraffa's letter speaks of how Gramsci, from prison, did not have a complete understanding of the social transformation that Italy was undergoing. Even more indicative is Gramsci's answer, written in his letter to Tatiana dated 8 February 1932, in which he questions the political intent to isolate Jews, which he instead ascribed to «the "subjective" tendency of the old rabbis and young Zionists». He also added that:

> There exists, or there will exists, a social category that will find itself in a very unfortunate situation when compared to the Jews and Protestants, and it will be (or already is) that of the unfrocked priests who have left priesthood and monks who have left the monastery, who will therefore be excluded from government positions, that is, will be degraded as citizens: that it has been possible to institute juridically such a category of civil pariahs seems to me much more important by far than the juridical position of Jews and Protestants, who are given juridical prerogatives that are far from degrading (Gramsci 1994, vol. II: 136).

According to Gramsci, not only the condition of the Jews is the same, if not better, of that of other minorities—which at the time of this exchange might have been true—but, if the Jewish question exists, it is not because of external factors, but because the Jews, or at least some of them, want to remain an isolated community, distinguishable from the Italians. For Gramsci, Jews were not discriminated, but rather they self-discriminated themselves. Sraffa replied via Tatiana on 8 March 1932, softening his positions, but underlying the difference between "antisemitism and *Two Worlds*", and reiterating his idea that Italy was now heading towards a more marked separation between Gentiles and Jews. Moreover, Sraffa emphasises how, at the beginning of the Thirties, «those who are in troubles (more comical than tragic, in truth) are exactly those Jews who exit or tend to exit silently from Judaism and merge with other Italians». Secular and fully integrated Jews into Italian society risked losing even the minimum prerogatives, of a religious and scholastic nature, which the Lateran Treaty guaranteed to observant Jews. In this way, Sraffa denies Gramsci's thesis: precisely what appeared to the prisoner as «juridical prerogatives that are far from degrading» revealed, in fact, a discriminatory and ghettoising character (see Sraffa 1991: 52–53). The letter closing the exchange was written by Gramsci on the 21 of March 1932. In it, the Sardinian thinker stresses how the same type of discrimination that Jews suffered can also be listed for other social groups: «For instance» he wrote «in

September 1920 the Association of Piedmontese Metallurgical Industrial Workers published a secret circular in which, during the war, it was ordered that no worker born "below Florence," that is, from southern and central Italy, should be hired». Such reductionism reveals Gramsci's limited understanding of the problem. After all, for Gramsci the «Jews in no sense represent a special culture, have some sort of particular historical mission in the modern world, are, in themselves, a developmental fermenting agent in the historical process» (Gramsci 1994, vol. II: 152).

The Influence of Liberal Intelligentsia

In denying the existence of a specific Jewish culture, Gramsci adopted Arnaldo Momigliano's thesis as presented in a review of Cecil Roth's *History of the Jews in Venice*. Momigliano, who owed intellectually to Benedetto Croce, claimed that «the history of the Jews of Venice, as much as the history of Jews from other parts of other Italian cities, is essentially […] the history of the shaping of their Italian national consciousness» and, he added: «The formation of their Italian consciousness occurred after the birth of the Italian consciousness in general, and the Jews thus became part of a national consciousness that was already constituted» (Momigliano 2016: 163). The Jews' trajectory in becoming Italians matched, to use Croce's words, «that of a Neapolitan in the old kingdom», or of a «Piedmontese in the Subalpine state», who, could not forget what they had been before being Italian, and therefore stressed it even more. Because the Italian state was a novelty, and because it acted as the emancipating political subject for the Jews, the Italian Jews were not an external community inserting themselves on a pre-constituted social landscape, and this is why, according to Gramsci, there would be no antisemitism in Italy. To this he added other reasons too. If it is true, like Gramsci claims, that «Italian national consciousness had to be the outcome, and was indeed the outcome, of the outdoing of two cultural forms: local particularism, and Catholic cosmopolitanism», and if the dismissal of Catholic cosmopolitanism, exemplified by «the birth of a secular spirit that opposed Catholicism» had to produce, amongst the Jews, «a nationalisation and a de-Jewfication» (Q15 §41 in Gramsci 1975: 1801), then the logical consequence would be the disappearance of antisemitism, without which the Jews would also disappear, thus resolving the Jewish question in the dissolution of the Jewish consciousness into the national consciousness.

In this sense Gramsci belongs to a tradition of thought that was common amongst the liberal and Risorgimento-influenced Italian intelligentsia

of the first half of the twentieth century. Even Croce believed that the only possibility to emancipate the Jews was for them to fully dissolve into the national consciousness. Even in the aftermath of World War II, in a letter to Merzagora dated September 1946, with the Nuremberg Trials ongoing and the Nazi-fascist misdeeds evident, Croce condemned them. Yet he wrote that the effort of the Jews «should be to merge better and better with the other Italians, trying to erase the distinction in which they persisted over the centuries and that, as it has given occasion and pretext in the past to persecutions, it is to be feared that it will still give in the future» (Croce 1963: 323–325).[7] After all, Gramsci wrote: «In terms of the history of culture it might be interesting to know that Farnese was Italian, Napoleon a Corse, or Rothschild a Jew, but historically their individual activities was incorporated by the State that they served, or the society they were a part of» (Q3 §116 in Gramsci 1975: 384).

Conclusions

To conclude, various and not mutually excluding traditions influenced Gramsci's ideas on the Jewish question. On the one hand, the strong influence of Marx transformed the Jews into iconic figures detached from reality, embodying the financial speculator. On the other hand, and not less relevant, we find ideas developed by thinkers of the Risorgimento and liberal philosophers that found resolution for the Jewish consciousness into the national consciousness. Both perspectives view persecutions and discriminations against the Jews as the residue of a pre-Enlightenment past, and neither is capable of capturing or understanding the specificities and actuality of the Jewish question. The Marxian tradition reabsorbed the Jewish question into the larger matter of human emancipation. The Italian liberals thought it resolved thanks to political emancipation.

Thinking through these two positions, Gramsci did not see the Jewish question as peculiar, and, linking the condition of the Jews to that of other minorities, he failed to grasp the specificity that, due to the reduction of the Jew to a symbol, characterises the Jewish question.

[7] Croce's argument also returns to typical features of his reflection on World War II and tends to absolve the Italian people, contributing to the myth of the "good Italian". According to Croce, all the responsibilities for the war and for Jew's persecution were to be ascribed exclusively to the Regime, without any co-responsibility of the Italian population.

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PART II

The Representation of Antisemitism

Introduction

In the interwar period, European Marxists still thought about the Jewish question along the lines developed within the Second International at the end of the nineteenth century, continuing the debate on the matter in the forms that Marx and Kautsky had given it. If not for the contribution of a few Social-Democrats, like Otto Bauer and Karl Renner, Marxists maintained the positions of radical cultural assimilationism and anti-Zionism. In Antonio Gramsci's case this is especially emblematic. In a 1931 letter in response to his sister-in-law Tatiana Shucht, who had recently seen Edwald Andrè Dupont's movie *Two Worlds* and asked Gramsci's opinion on Gentiles and Jews, the founder of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) answered that the matter had been already resolved by Marx. Christians had become Jewish by assimilating "the essence of Judaism—speculation", and once Europe had freed itself from Judaism, the issue would be sorted once and for all. As Andrea Pinazzi shows in his essay, for Gramsci on the one hand, Marx's strong influence transformed the Jews into iconic figures detached from reality, embodying the financial speculator. On the other hand, thinkers of the Risorgimento and liberal philosophers found resolution for the Jewish consciousness into the national consciousness. Both perspectives viewed persecutions and discriminations against Jewish people as the residue of a pre-Enlightenment past, and neither perspective is capable of capturing or understanding the specificities and actuality of the Jewish question. According to Gramsci, antisemitism was a disappearing practice that belonged to backwards and sheltered social realities. In

his prison writings, he defined it as a pre-modern leftover of ancient superstitions destined to dissolve, as well as irrelevant in Italy, where the Jewish minority had been granted citizenship at the time of the country's unification, just like everybody else. As it is known, Gramsci died in 1937, and never knew about the Racial Laws of 1938. Thus, he not only never commented on the antisemitism of Nazi Germany or of Fascist Italy in the Thirties, but he overall underestimated the problem like so many of his party comrades did, failing to add anything new to the interpretations of end-of-nineteenth century socialists (Tarquini 2019: 66–68). As Pinazzi notes in this volume, the Marxian tradition reabsorbed the Jewish question into the larger matter of human emancipation. In fact, at the end of the Thirties, no Marxist intellectual discussed the persecution of millions of people, because they did not recognize a Jewish specificity to it. In general, in the socialist milieu, the Jewish question was deemed a "fake problem, and antisemitism one of the many superstructures of capitalism" (Mele 2008: 241).

This was not merely an Italian approach, as none of the most influential European Marxists addressed the specificity of the anti-Jewish persecutions. In this regard, Enzo Traverso has recently written: "incapable of seeing Nazism as a new phenomenon, the German left maintained towards antisemitism its traditionally indifferent and minimizing attitude" (Mosse 1973: 106–116, Traverso 1990: 205). In those years, the majority of Marxists shared the ideas of Hungarian-German Socialist journalist Alexander Szanto, who claimed that antisemitism was on the defensive, that assimilation had been achieved in all European countries, and that Zionism had shown itself to be a reactionary and chauvinistic movement (Laqueur 1972).

As shown by the authors in this second part of the volume, at the end of the Second World War, with many Jewish intellectuals killed in the camps and others escaped to the United States or to the few countries that had not persecuted them, some left-wing thinkers, like the founders of the Frankfurt School, turned to antisemitism as a research topic. In his contribution, Stefano Petrucciani presents how this subject was among the themes that the members of the School never ceased to reflect upon. In the *Dialectic of the Enlightenment*, Adorno and Horkheimer's seminal work, antisemitism is explained as a violent mode of expression of the resentment towards the sacrifices that society imposes, one of the ways in which archaic mimetic (rather than sexual), impulses that the pain of civilization has repressed but not erased, are satisfied.

In this regard in her paper Alessandra Tarquini highlights that for Horkheimer and Adorno the hatred for the Jews was neither a belief nor a political practice, but rather an experience lived in opposition to those who represented an unacceptable otherness. Thus, without analysing institutions, social organizations and groups, the ruling classes, and even flesh-and-blood Jews, the antisemitism of totalitarian regimes, instead of being understood as the outcome of a precise political agenda, was reduced to one of the many manifestations of the violence of modernity. From this point of view their contribution to the analysis of antisemitism did not prompt a new understanding of the phenomenon, as their influence on left-wing Italian culture shows. The artists and intellectuals considered in Tarquini's contribution spoke about the *Shoah* as the expression of the dehumanization of man, rather than genocide. Pier Paolo Pasolini, undoubtedly more sensitive than others to these matters, described the Jews of Israel as the symbols of pain, as an under-proletariat, and as the wretched sons of the extermination camps who had transformed into a Western bourgeoisie who had abandoned the memory of their history and their identity.

More generally, in Italy, like shown by Bianca Dematteis, the left-wing press wrote about the massacre of the Jews already after the end of the war, continuing throughout the Fifties and the Sixties, giving it even more attention during the Eichmann trial. However, the stress was not on the reasons and the project that had led the ruling class to the mass killing of millions of people, but rather on the violence and terror inflicted. Dematteis describes how the Italian *Shoah* and the Italian Jews who survived the Holocaust appeared in the socialist press as an epiphenomenon of the Resistance. The stories of deportation were framed within larger narratives on the fight against Nazis and Fascists; the Jews were treated as witnesses of the tragedy, and their words were either transcribed or translated. This made them carriers of universal and political stances, not just witnesses of facts, but of a situation that needed to be transformed into collective memory. The analysis on the persecution of the Jews conflated, therefore, in the more general one on anti-fascism, so that, according to the Left, Jews, communists, socialists, democrats, and other persecuted groups could find in its parties their true defenders and representatives, as Dematteis notes in this volume.

An example of the difficulties of preserving the memory of the *Shoah* within the Left can be found in the political work of Umberto Terracini, one of the founding members and leaders of the Italian Communist Party.

Marta Nicolo traces the long and controversial procedure that led in 1955 to the Terracini Law on financial reparation in favour of the victims of political and racial persecutions. Initially the law did no envisage specific reparations for Jewish citizens and other individuals persecuted for racial reasons, focusing on generally supporting the victims of Fascism. The only person disturbing this ambivalence and stressing the particularity of the Jewish case was Terracini. He devoted his entire life to extending the law and defending it, and to help those who needed compensation to overcome bureaucratic quibbles. In this respect he certainly was an isolated case in his party, as Nicolo notes. Like the protagonist of the following contribution, German scholar and literary critic Cesare Cases, Terracini was Jewish. As we will see, they developed different political positions on the significance of antisemitism and Zionism. From this point of view, his trajectory embodies many of the themes discussed in this volume. Cases, as described by Simon Levis Sullam, in this volume, had an intellectual path that is representative of a part of the European Left and of the Jewish world. He always referred to the anti-Jewish persecution as the "trauma": a recurring spectre that had marked indelibly his existence. He began his political commitment in the Italian Communist Party between 1951 and 1959, until he moved to the area of the "New Left", and in particular to the social circles of journal *Quaderni Piacentini*, published between 1963 and 1984. Afterwards he became associated with the Communist daily newspaper *Il Manifesto*. However, in the late Seventies, when he started teaching at the University of Turin, he grew closer to the political movement *Lotta Continua*. By the Seventies and Eighties, Cases was a typical representative of the assimilated Italian Jews: left-wing and very critical of Israel and its politics.

As shown in the third part of the volume, many left-wing intellectuals proposed a very different analysis of Zionism, Israel and its conflicts.

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Adorno's Interpretation of Antisemitism and the Dialectics of Civilization

Stefano Petrucciani

Introductory Remarks

Antisemitism is certainly among the great problems that Adorno never ceased to reflect upon (Wiggershaus 1995: 350–380, Jay 1973: 219 ff). He discussed this theme on several occasions: it is addressed in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (written with Max Horkheimer[1]), in the great collective study published in 1950 under the title *The Authoritarian Personality*, and in other writings dating back to his American period (as, for example, the essay *Antisemitism and Fascist Propaganda*[2]), and to the time of his return to Germany (Adorno 2005a; Adorno 1964; Adorno 2019).

The highest moment of Adorno's reflections on antisemitism is the chapter that he and Horkheimer devoted to this issue in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. It was written in the summer of 1943, when the book had

[1] Preparatory reflections to the chapter on antisemitism can be read in Horkheimer 1985: 587–592.

[2] *Antisemitism and Fascist Propaganda* was written as a presentation for the conference on antisemitism that took place in San Francisco in the June of 1944.

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basically already been completed. Like many other works by the Frankfurt School, the chapter was the outcome of collective research. As Anson Rabinach writes, «Leo Lowenthal contributed to the first three theses, and it is likely that the remaining three, and certainly the fifth and most original thesis on 'idiosyncrasy' and 'mimesis', were jointly dictated by Horkheimer and Adorno in July 1943. The seventh thesis, added in 1947, was solely the work of Horkheimer» (Rabinbach 2000: 49).

The considerations on antisemitism expounded in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* go much further in depth than the ones Horkheimer had proposed in his essay *Die Juden und Europa*, printed in the eighth yearly issue (1939) of the «Zeitschrift für Sozialsforschung». In that essay, Horkheimer merely sketched a comparison between the fate of the Jews in the Europe of the 1930s, and the transformations of capitalism, highlighting how the extinction of the sphere of circulation in the new administered and state-directed capitalism had also rendered superfluous the role traditionally played by the Jews.

The chapter in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* not only distances itself from a reductive economical explanation, but also from an excessively unilateral reference to psychology. As Adorno later wrote, it stays clear from the misunderstanding «*The Authoritarian Personality* was exposed to from the outset and for which it was perhaps not wholly unresponsible on account of its emphasis: namely the criticism that the authors had attempted to ground antisemitism, and beyond that fascism, merely subjectively, subscribing to the error that this political-economic phenomenon is primarily psychological» (Adorno 2005b: 230).

Indeed, in the chapter devoted to antisemitism in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, this theme is studied and understood not only from one, but many different angles. Horkheimer and Adorno highlight that the ability of antisemitism to attract large strata of the population, thus achieving the complicity of many Germans in the extermination of millions of people, can be perhaps understood by considering that in antisemitism converge and find their destructive coalescence a number of explosive social tensions and contradictions.

Antisemitism, Repression and Mimesis

The most relevant interpretative key that emerges from the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (a key consistent with the critique of the Western civilization developed in the text) understands antisemitism as one of the ways through which impulses—not only sexual, but also archaic-mimetic—that

human civilization has repressed, but not eliminated, are tortuously satisfied. Horkheimer revisits this theme with great clarity in a comment from the early 1960s:

> Antisemitism basically belongs to those primordial instincts that civilization has rejected. According to the first Freud, it is a sadistic partial drive; for the later Freud, uncontrolled destruction. Actually, it directly belongs to the repressed, negative side of ambivalent sexuality, of non-sublimated promiscuity. Subconsciously, civilization then becomes the complex of the non-mastered, hated prohibitions. This becomes apparent in many obscenities, in the symbols and graffiti etched on the walls of public rest rooms, where the most revelatory element is the Jewish nose drawn as a penis. Here the most diverse instinctual drives converge, different levels of repression, the taste for the obscene, sexuality, hatred for civilization in general (Horkheimer 1974: 164 , Aphorism "Zur Metaphysik des Judenhasses").

Antisemitism and the violence against the Jews are a means to satisfy forbidden drives (as for example sadistic and aggressive ones) in a way that is socially allowed and approved. Adorno and Horkheimer stress the importance of *mimetic drives*, on whose repression our civilization is based, and that, through antisemitism, can be expressed freely. Very clear, in this respect, are the following passages from the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*:

> Civilization replaced the organic adaptation to otherness, mimetic behaviour proper, firstly, in the magical phase, with the organized manipulation of mimesis, and finally, in the historical phase, with rational praxis, work. Uncontrolled mimesis is proscribed […] The severity with which, over the centuries, the rulers have prevented both their own successors and the subjugated masses from relapsing into mimetic behaviour—from the religious ban on graven images through the social ostracizing of actors and gypsies to the education which 'cures' children of childishness—is the condition of civilization (Horkheimer & Adorno 2002: 148).

The resurgence of mimetic behaviours is instead a trait of authoritarian regimes: the sound of drums and the marching step that everyone has to imitate in unison, are symptoms of a regression of the Ego to an archaic level that civilization should have overcome by now. The mimetic behaviour, Adorno and Horkheimer maintain, is a defining trait of the antisemite:

> All the gesticulations devised by the Fuhrer and his followers are pretexts for giving way to the mimetic temptation without openly violating the reality principle—with honor, as it were. They detest the Jews and imitate them constantly. There is no antisemite who does not feel an instinctive urge to ape what he takes to be Jewishness (Horkheimer & Adorno 2002: 151).

In other words, what characterizes the antisemite (but not only him, the same applies to homophobes and racists) is the irresistible need of imitating what he, apparently, totally despises.

The Issue of Ambivalence

Another important theme is ambivalence: the antisemite easily attributes to the Jews reciprocally opposed and incompatible traits. For example, he sees them as both more advanced and more archaic than other peoples, or he perceives them as directing capitalism and, at the same time, as its enemies. Let us consider this aspect more in detail:

Judaism and taboos. A significant aspect of the way Jews are represented by others is the fact that they are strictly faithful to their prohibitions and their taboos, like avoiding eating pork, or not working on Saturdays. The Jews' attachment to their tradition is despised by antisemites, as it is a reminder of what they would like to forget: that civilization is built on taboos and prohibitions that are painful and hard to observe.

Due to their attachment to their traditions, the Jews are seen as archaic and backward. At the same time, however—and here's the ambivalence—they are also seen as the ones that, as a "foreign body" that has infiltrated the nation (*Volksgemeinschaft*), can elude the taboos and the strict rules applying to all the others, and allow themselves those pleasures that the hard regime of work denies to the silent majority. From this, even when leaving aside the darkest imagery (the medieval evocation of rituals, sacrifices and conspiracies), many all-too-common stereotypes follow: the more accentuated "sensuality" of the Jews, their stronger disposition to intellectual work, and the idea that the Jews can escape the reality of hard work because they can indulge in the luxury of living from usury.

In the persecutory imagery of the antisemite, the Jew, on the one hand, clings to his archaic taboos and, on the other, with no contradiction being noticed, enjoys the pleasures of sensuality, of the intellect and of the *bon vivre*. In response to this, the petty-bourgeois family man feels entitled to his resentment.

Judaism and capitalism. Another crucial element is the one concerning the relation between antisemitism and capitalism. Also for Adorno (who here is undoubtedly really quite "Marxist") the old saying that antisemitism is "the socialism of imbeciles" retains a good dose of truth. In trying to understand modern antisemitism, we cannot leave out of the picture capitalism and anti-capitalism. Antisemitism, as Jean-Paul Sartre wrote in his *Réflexions sur la question juive*, «is a mythical and bourgeois representation of class struggle, that could not exist in a classless society» (Sartre 1976: 108).[3] Leaving aside Sartre's optimism on a classless society, what I wish to highlight here is that, also for Adorno, nineteenth century's antisemitism is a phenomenon that expresses anti-capitalistic resentment. This resentment is directed at the most evident, but also most apparent, aspect of capitalism—the sphere of circulation, and to the Jews, for they are those who, in many phases of the history of the Christian-bourgeois West, were confined to this sphere because the other ones were precluded to them. As Adorno and Horkheimer write in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*:

> The Jews were the colonizers of progress. Having helped as merchants to disseminate Roman civilization throughout Gentile Europe, they became, in keeping with their patriarchal religion, representatives of urban, civic, and finally industrial conditions. As bearers of capitalist modes of existence from country to country they earned the hatred of those who suffered under that system. For the sake of the economic progress which today is their downfall the Jews were from the first a thorn in the side of the craftsmen and farmers whose status capitalism undermined (Horkheimer & Adorno 2002: 143).

Antisemitism becomes therefore a channel through which to express, without making the effort of translating them into political and rational forms, anti-capitalistic resentment, and hatred against the better-offs. The outcome is an egalitarianism of envy, which is but the horrible caricature of a society based on freedom and equality.

[3] It is worth mentioning, as observed by Wiggershaus (1995: 417), the reference to the Sartrian reflection found in *The Authoritarian Personality*: «There is marked similarity between the syndrome which we have labeled the authoritarian personality and the 'portrait of the antisemite' by Jean-Paul Sartre. Sartre's brilliant paper became available to us after all our data had been collected and analyzed. That his phenomenological 'portrait' should resemble so closely, both in general structure and in numerous details, the syndrome which slowly emerged from our empirical observations and quantitative analysis, seems to us remarkable». The comparison with Sartre is developed more extensively in Adorno 2016, a text on which we will dwell briefly in the continuation of the present essay.

Antisemitism's strength lies precisely in its ambivalence, and the capacity to attribute opposite traits to the enemy. For the antisemite, Jews are located at the centre of the global financial world-capitalism (so that they are the ideal target of his anti-capitalistic hatred), and at the same time they (as strangers to the national community and bearers of critical intelligence) are the secret engine of revolutions (starting from the Soviet one), and the sworn enemies of the given social order.

In directing his hatred against the Jews, therefore, the antisemite can satisfy two very strong and apparently contradictory drives (but we know that in the subconscious, unlike in rational thought, contradictions are the norm). He can unleash his anger against power and capital, whose prevarications he has to endure and from which he is humiliated, but he can also vent his resentment against those who rebel to the given social order. Being reminded that some people do not abide by the rules of capital, and instead criticize them, confronts him with his own cowardice and impotence. He feels the need to discredit those who question capitalist social order, and to think that they too belong to the caste of the privileged. The helpless little man, in fact, cannot afford any rebellion at all.

The hatred against the Jews allows him to release his rage against repression, but also against transgression, against power, as well as those who criticize it, against the financial capital, and those who contest it.

With antisemitism those archaic and undifferentiated drives that civilization has repressed reappear as aggression. They re-emerge among those to whom civilization denies different and more sophisticated gratifications. The rage for uncompensated renunciations and the protest against a frustrating social order is transformed into violence against the Jews. To that State-less people (a dangerous weakness, that the sadistic impulse senses and sets to persecute) are attributed, through unconscious dynamics that cannot be halted by their obvious contradictions, reciprocally incompatible traits. In antisemitic violence, the totalitarian order accomplishes its masterpiece. As Adorno and Horkheimer write, antisemites can finally unleash their forbidden drives under the cover of authority and with the alibi of being in the process of punishing the very transgressors of the social order. The «rebellion of oppressed nature against domination» (Horkheimer & Adorno 2002: 199; on the "revolt of nature" see also Horkheimer 1947, chapter 3), with the direction of the totalitarian leaders, is skilfully reversed and put to the service of the most brutal forms of domination. The pogrom re-enacts the archaic ritual homicide against those who were accused, by medieval superstition, of still indulging in that practice.

Antisemitism and the Rejection of the Other in Adorno's Remarks on the Authoritarian Personality

As is well known, Adorno returns once again on the issue of antisemitism in the great collective research on *The Authoritarian Personality*, published in 1950. However, for the sake of this chapter, it is worth discussing another important text that has only recently been published, the *Remarks on the Authoritarian Personality* (Adorno 2016), written by Adorno in 1948. This text was supposed to constitute the concluding chapter of the 1950 volume, but was not included in it for unknown reasons. One of the most interesting aspects of this work is Adorno's comparative approach to antisemitism, as he employs psychology, economics, study of religions, and sociology.

The aim of the research, Adorno writes, is to analyse «the type of person—in many respects characteristic of our time—whose general psychological disposition makes him a potential follower of totalitarian movements and bigoted ideologies» (Adorno 2016). In delineating the psychological type in question, Adorno uses orthodox Freudian psychology as his theoretical framework, making no concession to more contemporary psychoanalytical trends that Adorno considered revisionist, such as for instance Erich Fromm's, who by then had parted ways with the Institute for Social Research.

According to Adorno, in the psyche of the antisemite are at work a number of psychological mechanisms studied by Freud. For example, it can be said that the antisemite projects onto the Jew drives that actually belong to himself, but that he "removes" and does not recognize as his own. For Adorno, there is no doubt that antisemitism can be interpreted, in a Freudian way, as a transformation of repressed libido into destructiveness. But it is equally important to underline (also in order to avoid misunderstandings) that the deep roots of antisemitism are not to be found in the psyche of the subjects, but in the social totality by which these psyches are shaped. Adorno writes:

> We are convinced that the ultimate source of prejudice has to be sought in social factors which are incomparably stronger than the 'psyche' of any one individual involved […]. Our detailed analysis of subjective patterns does not mean that, in our opinion, prejudice can be explained in such terms. (Adorno 2016).

In Adorno's perspective, therefore, antisemitism cannot be "explained" through the psychic characteristics of the antisemites. Rather, these psychological attitudes must be clarified in relation to the social structure in which the subjects live. Adorno illustrates this point by referring to the feeling of envy:

> Envy is certainly an aspect of prejudice, but people are not antisemitic because they are envious of Jews. They are envious as such because of constant social pressure and the blatant contradiction between today's economic potentialities and their own deeply unsatisfactory existence. Eventually, their envy is directed against the Jews, or any other suitable minority group, following the line of least resistance […] people are inevitably as irrational as the world in which they live. […] Our hypothesis of what causes antisemitism is the following: It is due to the total structure of our society or, to put it more sweepingly, to every basically coercive society (Adorno 2016).

Another element which emerges very clearly from Adorno's writings, and which also retains a value for today's debate on antisemitism and racism in general, is that explaining them as forms of rejection of difference, or of incapacity of accepting who is different from us, is a reductionism. In this regard, in the *Remarks*, Adorno criticizes mainstream sociology, that finds «normal» and «natural» the distinction made by subjects between «in-group» and «out-group», as well as the fact that negative qualities are attributed to those who are not part of the «in-group». For non-critical sociology, hostility towards those who are not «internal» to our community, the rejection of the «different» and the «stranger», becomes a sort of obvious sociological constant, which does not even need to be explained. But this, according to Adorno, amounts to transforming into «invariants of social organization» facts that are, rather, «consequences of exploitation and repression» (Adorno 2016).

The rejection of difference, according to Adorno, is too easy a way out, which does not explain anything. It is the rejection itself that needs to be explained. Instead of assuming it as a given, we should ask ourselves why human beings love who is similar to them and hate who is different. But the search for an explanation leads us to reflect on wider social connections, in search of the social structures and dynamics that trigger the resurgence of antisemitism, racism, and prejudice. To sum up, Adorno's stance is that antisemitism does not derive from a generic rejection of difference, but, rather, from the fact that social conflicts and antagonism are projected

onto this difference. We will understand too little about antisemitism, at least modern antisemitism, if we do not consider it on the background of the conflicts between social classes and nations, and if we do not comprehend it on the basis of the great antagonistic dynamics that pervade our societies.

A Past that Does Not Pass

The reflection on the broader social connections in which modern antisemitism must be inscribed leads us to one of Adorno's most radical and questionable ideas. In the essay, he speaks of "a past that does not pass" (Adorno 2005a). Even when antisemitism seems latent or almost gone, even when the potential of totalitarianism is not explicit, we cannot rest easy, since totalitarianism is a menace threatening even democratic and wealthy societies, because «the objective conditions of society that engendered fascism continue to exist» (Adorno 2005a: 98). They survive, writes Adorno, because we live in a social order where subjects have to adapt to mechanisms they do not control, and because there is an economic system that, even when seeming to guarantee well-being and security, also imposes on subjects severe forms of anxiety, uncertainty and oppression. The totalitarian potential survives because of the frustration produced by a democracy that does not manage to keep its promises. All this generates a frustration that is always at risk of becoming resentment and hatred against democracy itself.

These concepts are developed in a very clear and effective way in the 1967 Viennese conference on the *Aspekte des neuen Rechtsradikalismus*:

> Nowhere democracy has really and completely actualized itself; it has remained formal. And, in this sense, the fascist movements could be described as the stigmata, the scars of a democracy that has not yet fully lived up to its own concept (Adorno 2019: 18).

The feeling of impotence and isolation experienced by subjects is inherent to the system. Even when the economy is strong, fear of unemployment and economic crisis can be escaped only temporarily, as social actors know that they could suddenly lose all the material security they have strived so hard for. However, another aspect, which Adorno also mentions, should not be underestimated: since wealth coexists with scarcity, and as long as «famine continues to reign across entire continents»

(Adorno 2005a: 96), it is difficult to enjoy comforts. On the contrary, the fact that the borders of the citadels of wealth are surrounded by large masses of people who have nothing can only be perceived as a threat by the wealthy. This insecurity has a very real objective basis, upon which the seeds of demagogy, authoritarianism, and antisemitism are always ready to germinate.

On this matter, it seems to me that Adorno's observations, even if expounded a few decades ago, remain substantially valid. They, indeed, allow us to better understand this world of ours, even though it has changed so much compared to his. Over the last three decades, enormous transformations have marked European history: the collapse of oppressive regimes (for which Adorno never showed any sympathy) has dramatically re-proposed a number of issues to which he had already drawn our attention, even though they were latent at his times. And today, even more than in the past, it would be inconsiderate to underestimate the dangers he pointed out. The reasons for this are many and varied, but the facts are here for all of us to see: the irruption of capitalism in societies previously governed by an oppressive USSR-like collectivism has led to a growing sense of uncertainty and social anxiety, while large sectors of the world population are now more vulnerable to demagogic, sometimes openly fascist and antisemitic propaganda. Isolation and insecurity lead to a renewed search, in nationalisms, for surrogates of past communities. The more the tendencies that lead to a rational and discursive critique of existing structures are weakened, the greater the risk that the social resentment pervading our societies will destructively unleash itself. Antisemitism should not come as a surprise: the people of the Diaspora, the wandering people who preserved their own identity beyond actual or desired national communities, always run the risk of becoming the target of those who seek, in nationalisms old and new, moderate or brutal, an antidote to the coldness of the impersonal social relations mediated by the market.

For these reasons, antisemitism and racism, prejudice, and demagogy are dangers that, even where they do not appear exceedingly threatening, must not be underestimated. The conflicts and the antagonisms that can cause a return to barbarism have not been properly addressed, and the present, where we are confronted daily with some form of a resurgence of horror, is the proof of that. Even in the countries where democracy and tolerance are by now taken for granted, many sorts of social crisis are enough for the old demons, such as the cult of personality, demagogy,

social Darwinism, prejudice, and oppression against minorities, to make their re-appearance.

While Adorno is very resolute in denouncing the persistence of dangers that are still before our eyes today, he does not preach a pessimism that, in my opinion, there would be very good reasons for. On the contrary, the lucid awareness that the horror can repeat itself at any time must encourage us—this is Adorno's thesis—to undertake all measures, even the smallest ones, that could serve to counter the spread of the virus of prejudice, racism, and antisemitism.

In the considerations he dedicated in the 1950s and 1960s to antisemitism, Adorno devotes much attention to pedagogical practices in schools and in the family, as well as to the ways in which the youngest members of society can develop so they do not fall prey to totalitarian, nationalist, racist regressions.

To conclude, I believe that with regard to this specific issue, Adorno's thinking shows an essentially twofold aspect. On the one hand, as we have said, for Adorno every measure that can foster a better society must be undertaken. Every available means must be employed, if this implies preventing the horror from repeating itself. On the other hand, however, Adorno is also well aware that the deepest roots of this menace do not reside in human psychology, but in social antagonisms that are far from being overcome, and that cause social actors to be prone to regression, hatred and violence. This is a very peculiar feature of Adorno's thought, belonging to the deepest convictions of the German philosopher: against anthropological defeatism, he rules out the idea that human beings, for reasons inherent to their nature, to their DNA, to the "territorial imperative", or to any other naturalistic determination, would be destined to a continuous war of all against all. This is not because nature is good, gentle, or innocuous. Nothing could be further from the truth. For Adorno, the regression we see being reproduced in our civilized world can only be explained through the antagonisms of our very civilization, not by means of an archaic, barbaric nature that would absolve the present social relations from every responsibility.

There is no need to say that this crucial aspect of Adorno's thought can be regarded, today, as one of its most problematic elements: after rereading Adorno's pages, the question still stands whether cultural hatred can really only be interpreted as a product of social antagonisms—as Adorno always maintained—or whether it could also have a deeper

anthropological root. Whether, namely, the constitution of one's own identity and the de-valorization of the other could be reciprocally connected processes, that even a utopian post-capitalist society would have to deal with.

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Left-Wing Intellectuals and the Representation of the Shoah in Italy: From the Second World War to the 1970s, Between Anti-Fascism and the Frankfurt School

Alessandra Tarquini

Extermination camps are part of our civilisation,
being but the extreme manifestations of an ongoing process,
the process of alienation
—Alberto Moravia, Man as an Aim (1946)

Introduction

The previous contributions have examined the discussion of the European Left on antisemitism. This contribution furthers the analyses by looking at the interpretation of the *Shoah* in the works of left-wing writers from the end of the Second World War until the beginning of the Seventies.

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The paper is divided into four parts. The first one introduces the main political parties of the Italian Left, their political culture, and their relationship with the highly educated classes in the decades taken into consideration. The second one deals with how several influential writers interpreted antisemitism and the *Shoah* from 1945 to the end of the Fifties, while the third section explores the turn occurred in the following decade. Finally, the fourth part presents some concluding remarks on the contribution of the Frankfurt School and how it crucially influenced the ideas of Italian intellectuals, especially from the second half of the Sixties.

Left-Wing Parties and Italian Intellectuals

At the April 1948 elections, and for the following twenty years, the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) and the Italian Communist Party (PCI) gained about a third of the Italian votes (Agosti 1991, Gualtieri 2001, Cerchia 2011, Sabbatucci 1991, Ciuffoletti, Degl'Innocenti, Sabbatucci 1993, Mattera 2010, 2011). Engaged in building mass mobilization and to become the privileged spokesmen for the working class and the middle classes, these parties presented themselves as the makers of the rediscovered democracy and as the vanquishers of Fascism who would lead Italy into a new historical phase. In reality, in the 1948 elections, the Left lost to the Christian Democracy (DC), the party that would rule the country for the next forty years, giving birth to an atypical democracy where, unlike in other European countries, no alternation between conservatives and progressives occurred.

On this backdrop, the Left, and especially the PCI, were particularly interested in involving intellectuals in the political battle (Vittoria 2014: 24–66). Togliatti, the leader of this party, aware that the international milieu prevented a Communist revolution, was convinced that the highly educated social classes could play a fundamental role in affirming and strengthening his party in Italian society. From the end of the Forties, painters, writers, film-makers, and university professors who were not necessarily Marxists, joined the PCI. Many others became sympathizers, who, without formally acceding to the party, collaborated actively with it. A small, and yet not irrelevant number of intellectuals joined the Socialist Party, which shared with the PCI a Marxist-Leninist outlook.

The commitment of these activists and their political effort to participate in the construction of the new democracy was different in Italy than

in other European countries. From 1945, the Italian Left comprised the PCI and the PSI, whose alliance eclipsed the Italian Democratic Socialist Party (PSDI). This party, through the next four decades, remained small and ready to support DC governments. In Europe, the PSI was in conversation with other left-wing socialist groups, rather than with Labourites, and it was not a member of the Socialist International, that had transformed into a Social-Democrat organization in 1951. It also kept a neutral stance in regards to the Cold War, which later turned into pro-Soviet pacifism based on the notion that it was impossible to be equidistant from both Moscow and Washington (Benzoni 1967, Nenni 1974, Ardia 1976, Di Nolfo 1977: 47–66, Pesetti 1989, Scirocco 2010, Tarquini 2019a: 178–181). Until the Sixties, the PSI's culture, if not Stalinist, was certainly pro-Soviet and Marxist-Leninist, struggling to veer in a more politically independent direction. From its part, the PCI, after the war, was markedly close to the politics and culture of USSR Communism. After an initial and tactical adhesion to a political approach based on an alliance between the winners of Second World War, the PCI came to support a foreign policy that was faithful to the USSR, and that was only questioned at the end of the Sixties (Pons 1992: 435–456, Pons 1994: 1123–1147, Pons 1995, Guiso 2007, Aga Rossi Zaslavski 2018).

Outside of the Marxist tradition, the Republican Party, re-established in 1946, despite an important history, remained minor. An allied of the DC, it never secured that relationship with intellectuals and cultural organizations that socialists and communists developed. In general, the secular, actionist, and liberal part of the Left never managed to unite under one banner, shadowing instead the PSI and trying to divert it from its alliance with the PCI (Spinelli 1953, Polese Remaggi 2004, Soddu 2008).

Therefore, in post-war Italy, the two main left-wing parties, that, as mentioned before, represented a third of the Italian population, were Marxist. For both of them, antisemitism and the *Shoah* were never a priority, and in the first years after the end of the conflict neither of them showed any particular interest in the racial persecution that Italian and Europeans had endured, describing it on their newspapers as one of the many aspects of Nazi-Fascist violence. The scant attention to the topic that had begun in the Thirties thus continued in Europe in the following years (Mosse 1973: 106–116, Traverso 2004, Tarquini 2019b: 55–93).

The Representation of the Shoah (1945–1959)

The newspapers of the Italian Left discussed the genocide already right after the conclusion of the conflict, presenting thorough reconstructions of the Nazi camps that were published with more frequency from November 1945 until October 1946, when the Nuremberg Trials brought the *Shoah* to the attention of the world (Focardi 2010: 11–35, Tarquini 2019b: 84–93). However, in these newspapers, the emphasis was neither on the reasons that had led to the mass killing of millions of people, nor on the larger project, or on the context that had led the Nazis to exterminate their own population. Rather, they stressed the dimension of violence and terror. Whilst the newspapers did inform their readers about concentration and extermination camps, they failed to address the significance of antisemitism, as the articles of many left-wing thinkers and writers demonstrate.

In 1946, novelist Natalia Ginzburg published *Il figlio dell'uomo* (The son of man) on *L'Unità*, the PCI newspaper, in which she described her memories of fear, the terror of the police, and the impossibility to return to a normal life. Two years before, her husband, Leone Ginzburg, a leader of the anti-Fascist movement of Russian Jewish origin, had been tortured and killed in the Roman prison of Regina Coeli. Despite this, Natalia Ginzburg never mentioned in the article the antisemitic persecutions, and in the first page of her narration wrote:

> Those of us who have been persecuted will never find peace again. A bell ringing in the middle of the night can mean nothing but "police station" for us. And it is useless to tell ourselves over and over that behind the word "police station" there might be friendly faces to whom we can ask for help and assistance. In us, that word will always cause mistrust and fear. If I look at my children sleeping, I think with relief that I will not have to wake them up in the middle of the night to run away (Ginzburg 1962: 33).

With that strength of expression that characterized her writing, Ginzburg voiced the impossibility to elaborate a traumatic and violent experience. Without mentioning the Jewish people, and using the term persecuted to speak of the greatest massacre of the twentieth century as something that pertained to humanity as a whole, she was the first in a long line of authors to discuss the *Shoah* this way (Gordon 2013: 168). A few pages later, she evoked the image that gave the title to her piece:

> There is no peace for the son of man. Foxes and wolves have their lair, but the son of man has nowhere to rest his head. Our generation is a generation of men. It is not a generation of foxes and wolves. We all long to rest our heads somewhere, we all wish for a small lair, dry and warm. But there is no peace for the sons of men (Ginzburg 1962: 35).

Therefore, to remember the *Shoah*, she chose the Biblical image of the son of man, present both in the Old and in the New Testament and pertaining to the suffering of every human.

That same year, Alberto Moravia, in his essay *L'uomo come fine* (Man as an aim), explained that Nazism was the explosion of rationalism that had turned politics into science. In his opinion, it was "a perverse and absurd form of modernity. A perfectly rational and inhuman aim, pursued by using millions of men, with extreme violence and pure reason, united to produce enormous sufferings (Moravia 2019: 4406, Gordon 2013: 170)." In line with this, he wrote about concentration and extermination camps as the symbols of this completed dehumanization, and defined them as the place where there were "all the facts of the modern world, brought to their extremes, […] an inhuman aim, the extermination, pursued and obtained only by means of man, and with the maximum violence possible (Moravia 2019: 4406)." In this sense, he described the subjugation of man to a mere instrument of a political end, undertaken with lucidity.

In his essay, Moravia stated that camps are part of our civilization, being but "extreme examples of one trajectory", that of "alienation". He was clear about it. Nazism's antisemitism, the Nuremberg Laws, the concentration camps, and the Italian Racial Law of 1938 had nothing specific about them. Nothing distinguished them from other forms of violence of modern Western civilization that had reached its rationalist apex in the interwar period. In the 1964 volume that included *L'uomo come fine* (1946), the word antisemitism is not present. Like Ginzburg, in the aftermath of the conflict, Moravia was another prominent author from the Left who talked about the slaughter of the Jewish people as an expression of dehumanization, rather than as genocide.

This analysis evokes the much more structured and articulated theories of the Frankfurt School's thinkers that will be amply discussed in the final section of this paper. In reality, such analogy works only on a superficial level, because the influence of the Frankfurt School on Italian culture became relevant only from the second half of the Sixties (Clemente 1999: 1–17). As highlighted by Robert Gordon, Moravia's analysis rested on

themes that belonged to European Existentialism and Christian Humanism, in those years popular also in other disciplines. For instance, Communist painter Renato Guttuso drew sketches of the Fosse Ardeatine Massacre, in which more than 300 people died on 24 March 1944. For its brutality, the number of victims, and the circumstances that led up to it, the massacre became the symbol of the Nazi occupation of Rome, besides being the largest mass killing of Jews in Italy. Guttuso titled his drawings *Gott mit uns* (God is with us). The figure of the suffering Christ showed that the *Shoah* concerned everyone, not just the Jewish people because it was the emblem of evil, of the death of God, and of the degeneration of the human race (Ajello 1979, De Grada 2004, Gordon 2013: 99–128).

These intellectuals fancied themselves busy with the construction of a democratic Italy. They were united under their parties' banners in the fight against DC governments, against a NATO affiliation forced by the Cold War, and in claiming their identity as anti-Fascists. For their part, to gain the consensus of the Italian people while building new mass-based political parties, Socialists and Communists presented themselves as national parties, the only ones that could bring Italy back on the track of democracy and modernity after the discontinuity caused by Fascism.

On this backdrop, the reflection on antisemitism called into question the relationship with Fascism, and underscored the difficulties to elaborate the country's recent past. As we will see, many intellectuals underplayed the importance of Italian racism, painting a picture of a country that had been indeed under a dictatorship, but that had never really been antisemitic because it had never been truly Fascist.

By granting Fascism an identity, many left-wing militants would have had to explain the reasons why they had given their support to the totalitarian regime. They would have had to explain how their generation had become democratic and anti-Fascist right after 1943, even though they had not engaged in any form of public dissent during Mussolini's time in power. Some of them had even been employed in official roles. Thus, they chose to blur the specificities of Fascism, negating that it had any historically precise and unique attribute (Gentile 2002: VI–VIII, De Bernardi 2006: 1–20). In this resulting narrative, Italians had never been truly Fascist, least of all racist or antisemitic. Those who had endured Fascist violence were appreciated as the best expression of a society that had not been corrupted by Mussolini's regime. Jews, communists, socialists, democrats, and others who had been persecuted would thus find in the Left

their true representatives. However, this perspective hindered the possibility to understand phenomena like Fascism and antisemitism that transformed the twentieth century not because they were barbaric, inhuman, or regressive, but because they were, in fact, modern and capable of involving millions of people.

For this reason, at the beginning of the Fifties, the preservation of the memory of recent dramatic events was neither accompanied by an analysis of why antisemitism had been one of the key features of Nazism, nor by reflections on racism under the Fascist regime. For instance, in presenting the stories of survivors, socialist newspapers denounced German heinousness, stressing the aspects of brutality, sadism, or perversions, and thus demonstrating that to them denouncing the horrors mattered more than reflecting on its causes. A victim's origin, Jewish or Protestant, communist or anarchist, was not relevant (Tarquini 2019b: 84–96).

The Italian reviews to Anna Frank's *Diary*, published in Italian in 1954, and Primo Levi's *Se questo è un uomo* (*If this is a man*, published first in 1947 and then in 1958) reflected this as well. On the communist newspaper, *L'Unità*, Marxist literary critic Giuseppe Petronio stressed Anna's maturity and her faith in humanity but did not mention the fact that her destiny was the same as that of millions of people.[1] Anti-fascist writer Fausta Cilente spoke of the story of the Frank family in a very positive review that was however devoid of any reflection on the Jewish genocide.[2] None of these journalists hid reality, but they did not question why the Jewish people had become the target of mass persecution either.

Levi's novel is emblematic of such approach. Based on the author's experience at Monowitz, one of Auschwitz sub-camps, *Se questo è un uomo* was rejected by Einaudi's consultants Natalia Ginzburg and Cesare Pavese because they believed it might not interest readers, since the market had already been flooded with new titles. Additionally, the book "was not appropriate for the sizzling joyous climate of a nation intoxicated by the conclusion of a nightmare (Gordon 2013: 99–128, Levi 2001: 85, Cavaglion 1993: 5, Cavaglion 2008: 117–146)." Published first by small house De Silva, owned by Franco Antonicelli, in 1947, the volume did not prompt debates or discussions, even though it did not go fully unnoticed,

[1] Petronio, Giuseppe. 1954. Il diario di Anna Frank. *L'Unità*, April 27. Melodia, Giovanni. 1954. Destinazione Dachau. *L'Unità*, July 9. Bertolucci, Giuseppe. 1954. Il diario di Anna Frank. *Mondoperaio*, May 15.

[2] Cialente, Fausta. 1954. Anna ragazza ebrea. *L'Unità*, May 6.

since both Italo Calvino and social-democratic historian Aldo Garosci reviewed it (Tarquini 2019b: 125–126). The former described it as a magnificent book that was destined to find its way into the collective memory as one of the masterpieces of World War literature. Offering a compelling testimony of the horror of the camps paired with a formidable narrative strength, *Se questo è un uomo* describes the experience of the Italian Jews who had been deported from Fossoli internment camp to Auschwitz. It speaks of how differently they coped with the threat of annihilation and of the anguish of the survivors, who struggled to convey to others what they had endured, either because they were not believed, or because their stories were only met with indifference. Garosci considered Levi's book a masterpiece as well (Pipitone 2011: 113–166).[3] In a country uninterested in the camps, the text reminded its readers that the men transformed into grey ghosts were Jews. The novel did not reach a large audience, and Einaudi rejected it again in 1952, falling into oblivion for many years until it finally decided to publish it in 1958. With more than 500,000 copies sold in Italy only, the book was translated into eight languages and became one of the most famous texts on the *Shoah*.

This incapacity to understand the Jewish character of the persecutions influenced even Communist poet and 1959 Literature Nobel Laureate Salvatore Quasimodo. He was born in Modica, Sicily, in 1901. In 1940, when he was already one of the leading figures of Italian Hermetism, he asked for and received significant financial support from the Fascist Ministry of Popular Culture (Sedita 2010: 84–88, Princiotta 2016). In 1941, three years after the implementation of the Racial Laws, his literary merits and proximity to Fascism procured him a teaching post in Italian literature at the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Milan. After the war, as many others did, he joined the PCI. In 1948 he visited Auschwitz as part of a global conference for peace. On that occasion, he composed *Auschwitz*, one of the first poems on the camps written by someone who had not experienced them. An exceptional literary achievement, raw and simple, it turned Auschwitz into a metonymy for the *Shoah* (Gordon 2013: 174–179). Talking to an imaginary soldier, the poet, mentioning the Jews, describes women, clumped in shacks, bereaved of their femininity, as well as the rain, the barbed wires, the iron tangles, and the rusty poles, conjuring up a barren landscape deprived of feelings. However, in this poem, so powerful in evoking pain and in denouncing the horror of an

[3] Garosci, Aldo. 1947. Se questo è un uomo. *Italia socialista*, December 27.

extermination camp, the author does not ask why such mass extermination occurred there.

It could be argued that poetry does not need to answer historical questions and that the lack of references to the Jewish genocide should not be surprising. Novels or poems are the outcome of creative choices and do not search for historical truths. Nonetheless, the themes and stylistic choices of an author speak of their cultural horizon, of their visions of the present and the future, and even more so when they choose to write about historical events. At the end of the Fifties, Quasimodo was one of the most important intellectuals of the Italian Left. He published *Auschwitz* in *Il falso e il vero verde* in 1956, together with other works that celebrated the Resistance and its martyrs. In 1959 he won the Nobel Prize for Literature, and in December 1960, on the daily newspaper *Le Ore*, he spoke "of the unquestionable financial power of the Jews", and of their insufficient sense of duty and loyalty towards their country of origin. Additionally, he accused Jewish people of self-isolation and of refusing integration with the rest of humanity.[4]

Therefore, Quasimodo's description of Auschwitz, elevating it to the symbol of the massacre of millions of people, not only did not imply an analysis of antisemitism, but was even compatible with the use of antisemitic tropes.

The 1960s Turn

Between December 1959 and January 1960, a wave of neo-Nazi demonstrations hit several European capitals, arousing condemnation and disdain in public opinion around the globe. A few days afterwards, the leaders of the Italian Left organized and headed protests against intolerance and racism (Tarquini 2019b: 145). From that moment forward, the condemnation of antisemitism entered civil society, being acknowledged as part of the recent past, with the younger generation growing more sensitive and interested in the topic (Pedullà 2012: 907). Democratic parties began to censor antisemitism in ways it had never been before, reporting episodes that deserved public condemnation. With the turn of the decade, the interpretation of Fascism, of anti-fascism and antisemitism expanded outside of just the discussions of intellectuals and left-wing politicians. Additionally, in 1960 after the resignation of the Tambroni government,

[4] Lattes, Dante. 1961. Tu quoque, Quasimodo? *Rassegna mensile di Israel*, January 1: 35.

supported by the neo-Fascist MSI, the Socialists of the PSI formed the government, thus launching a new phase of the history of the Italian Republic that included a deeper attention to the past. Finally, the trial of Adolf Eichmann also contributed to strengthening the perception of the importance of conserving the memory of antisemitism, in Italy as well as internationally, and transformed the idea of what the *Shoah* had been throughout the globe. The court case was the first trial for crimes against humanity to take place in Israel, and the first to have worldwide reverberation. As it is well known, for the first time one of the makers of the genocide confirmed what the survivors had told, taking part to a trial against history in which six million victims asked for justice to their executioner (Cesarani 2006, Hausner 2010, Galimi 2018: 1874–2314). Thus began what Annette Wieviorka called the "era of the eyewitness", a new phase in the analysis of antisemitism characterized by the experiences of the survivors. This was evident in the left-wing Italian press that greatly talked about them, as well as about many former Nazis that lived in Western Europe (Wiewiorka 1999).

A considerable number of eyewitness accounts found their way into the newspapers of the Italian Left. Both the communists and, even more so the socialists, gave significant attention to these issues (Tarquini 2019b: 150–153). Despite this, the representation of antisemitism of left-wing intellectuals did not change. If it is true that from the beginning of the Sixties the matter gained prominence, it is also true that the substance of the arguments stayed the same, both among the survivors and the commentators to their accounts. This new sensibility brought to light events that had been removed from the collective memory, but did not lead to new analyses. A clear example of this is the fate of Renzo de Felice's 1961 book *Storia degli ebrei italiani durante il fascismo* (*A history of Italian Jews under Fascism*) that for long remained an isolated case until it sparked a new string of research in the mid-Eighties.

The causes of mass antisemitism and its rise to a political reality in many European countries were also not examined in depth. As it had occurred during the Fifties, the left-wing press continued to describe the genocide in two main ways: either as a sign of the wickedness of man and of Nazi insanity, or as an aberration of capitalism. As Alberto Cavaglion wrote, the decade following the Eichmann trial was marked by a guilty silence that would only dissipate in the Seventies (Cavaglion 2008: 124–127, Galimi 2018: 2728–3054).

The work of poet and director Pier Paolo Pasolini is indicative of this. Unlike many intellectuals of his generation, Pasolini talked about Jews and antisemitism in many of his theatre and film productions of the Sixties and Seventies (Gordon 2013: 190–194). In his 1964 collection *Poesia in forma di rosa* (Poetry in the shape of a rose) he published *Israel*, a text produced after a research trip to Palestine for his film *The Gospel according to St. Matthew*, shoot in Italy. Discussing the most interesting aspects of the Jewish State, he noticed an ambiguity. If, on the one hand, Israel appeared to have found in the *kibbutz* its truest expression, on the other hand, strolling around Tel Aviv and wondering whom the Jewish people were, Pasolini asked why they behaved like Europeans, children of an Aryan bourgeoisie of Western ancestry (Pasolini 1976: 171).

> Are they not here to be killed? Do they not know that? Why those gazes of father-sons, in front of whom their fathers are but wretched, filthy animals in the alleys of extermination camps, in the freight trains already loaded with dead? From those sublime vermin, they were born. And now they reproach that death that granted them their life? (ibidem).

In his words, the Jewish people preserved their poeticism until they became the victims of atrocious violence and persecutions. Miserable, disowned children of exterminations camps who had turned into a Western bourgeoisie, they were losing the memory of their history and their identity. In this St. Paul-like poetics, only the persistence of suffering sparked Pasolini's empathy. In the name of pain and of antisemitism as an identity trait of the Jewish people, on the eve of the Six-Day War in June 1967, he sided with Israel and accused *L'Unità* to be worse than a bourgeois newspaper (Gordon 2013: 191, Vitiello 2013: 85–101). On the *Nuovi Argomenti*, a magazine founded by Alberto Carocci and Alberto Moravia in 1953, that Pasolini directed, he wrote:

> These days, when I read *"L'Unità"* I feel that same pain I get when I read the most deceiving bourgeois newspaper. How could communists take such a clear-cut stance? Was this not an opportunity for a "hesitant choice", which is but the only, most human type of choice of all? Would the readers of *"L'Unità"* not benefited from it? Would they not have finally thought, and that is the least they could do, that nothing in this world can be black or white? And that they asked to form their own opinion? Maybe because Israel is a State born in the wrong way? But which State, today free and sovereign, was not born in the wrong way? And who, among us, can guar-

> antee to the Jews that in the West there will never be another Hitler, or that in America there will not be concentration camps for drug users, homosexuals, or… Jews? Or if the Jews will still be allowed to live peacefully in the Arab world?[5]

For Pasolini, the violence that persisted in Europe justified the existence of Israel, because nobody could ensure to the Jews a future free from persecution. Pasolini was one of the few Marxist intellectuals who took a pro-Israeli position in the summer of 1967. Nonetheless, on antisemitism, his stance was much more in line with that of other left-wing intellectuals of his generation.

In *Porcile* (*Pigsty*—1969), but even more so in *Salò o le 120 giornate di Sodoma* (*Salo or the 120 fays of Sodom*—1975) Pasolini returned on these themes and influenced greatly the literary and film culture of the following years. *Salò* began with a gathering that evoked the Wannsee Conference of 1942 and told the story of four members of the Social Republic torturing and raping a group of young anti-fascist militants, chosen after long stakeouts. In a villa, for 120 days, the protagonists abused the bodies of the kidnapped teenagers, thus depicting the violence of Fascist power.

Pasolini described Fascism as a perverse and sadistic dominance. Like many Marxist intellectuals of the Sixties, he was not only criticizing the regime that had ruled Italy between 1922 and 1943, but also the "society of consumption" that was insinuating itself in modern democracies through pervasive and devastating consumerism (Pasolini 2018: 172). Thus, in the movie, he represented Fascism and antisemitism as forms of domination that belonged to bourgeois societies, convinced as he was that there was not much difference between totalitarianism and liberal democracies, and that the violence of Western countries was not less destructive than that of a dictatorship. Jews, homosexuals, anti-fascists, alienated workers, slum-dwellers, and Third World guerrilla fighters all indistinctly bore the marks of fascist brutality. As George Mosse wrote in regards to leftist American intellectuals of the Sixties influenced by Herbert Marcuse, in this criticism of bourgeois, democratic and liberal society there was no space of a reflection on the specificity of antisemitism (Mosse 1973).

[5] Pasolini, Pierpaolo. 1967. Israele. *Nuovi argomenti*, April-June: 278–280.

The Antisemitism Without Jews of the Frankfurt School

As shown in the previous pages, from the beginning of the Fifties, antisemitism and the *Shoah* did not receive much attention from left-wing intellectuals, who were militating in the main political parties to build a new country. Thus, on the main organs of the Left, the Jews were discussed only in general terms as one of the groups persecuted by Nazi-Fascism, so that, not unlike political dissidents, they surely deserved the support of the democratic forces.

At the start of the Sixties, a new understanding and sensibility for the issue manifested, determined by three factors: a reaction to the neo-Nazi wave the exploded in Europe; the rise to power in Italy of the Socialists; and the aftermath of the Eichmann trial. This turn did not involve a deeper comprehension of the antisemitism of the Thirties and the Forties, and this novel interest extinguished in just a few years. Instead, among intellectuals of the new Left that had developed outside of the anti-fascist tradition, and that was often critical of it, a reading of the fascist regimes and antisemitism gained traction, influenced by the ideas of the theorists of the Frankfurt School, whose translated works started to circulate in Italy in the second half of the Sixties.

At the beginning of the *Dialectic of the Enlightenment*, Horkheimer and Adorno explain the significance of their study by claiming that the Enlightenment had "always aimed at liberating human beings from fear and installing them as masters (Horkheimer & Adorno 2002: 1)." In an attempt to free humankind from religion and superstition, the culture of the Enlightenment had shown itself to be violent and totalitarian, creator of a world in which reason and science had shown thoroughly their thirst for power, culminating in fascism. For the authors, totalitarianisms were the product of modernity and bourgeois society, rather than original political movements with clear characteristics, and regimes with ruling classes, institutions, and organizations that had transformed the politics and culture of the twentieth century. As many scholars have underlined, in the thought of the Frankfurt philosophers, the steps of Western democracies towards the extension of liberties and the sharing of political decisions, as well as the fight against fascism, seem to have little relevance (Petrucciani 1998: 133–154, Honneth 2002, Bolaffi 2005: 71–80, Ferrari 2005: 3–24). In fact, in 1939, Max Horkheimer in *The Jews and Europe* had

already written that fascism was a reality of modern society (Horkheimer 1978: 36, Jacobs 2014: 44).

Given the above, Horkheimer and Adorno, in the *Dialectic of the Enlightenment* (1947), describe antisemitism as an archaic impulse, but also as the most authentic expression of totalitarian ferocity, as well as the inhuman outcome of Western civilization (Petrucciani 2007: 9). For them, fascists were structurally antisemitic because they saw in the Jewish people the "other" who had no land nor power, the different and the weak, upon whom they could project their fears in a paranoid process engendered not by the individual, but by humanity as a whole alienated by civilization (Mele 2008: 269).

In line with this perspective, using the theories of social psychology, in *The Authoritarian Personality*, Adorno and his co-authors wrote of the presence of a "potential for fascism" in some individuals. To identify it, they selected several indicators, including the level of antisemitism (Adorno 1950: 57–92), defined as the verbalization of stereotypical and irrational ideas about the Jews. Additionally, fascists glorified order, declared themselves enemies of sensuality, of luxury, of exhibitionism, and considered the Jews dangerous menaces for these values. This rigidity led Adorno to believe that at the root of such deep hatred rested subconscious dynamics and in particular Freud's mechanism of projection. This consists in the idea that we cast onto others our own characteristics to conceal stances of our own that we see as immoral. The research on the authoritarian personality demonstrated that fascism was, above all, the main trait of conformists with a repressive educational background, who were fast at voicing criticism. Unable to express their aggression on their parents, antisemitic fascists re-direct it at alternative targets and grow to become fearful individuals, fascinated by authoritative figures, and hostile to those who belong to other social groups.

For the founders of the Frankfurt School, the hatred against the Jews was not a belief or a political practice, but rather a "psychological experience" converging on subjects that conveyed an unacceptable diversity (Mele 2008: 250). Thus, eliminating the analysis of fascist institutions and of the ruling classes, and even flesh and blood Jews, the antisemitism of totalitarian regimes was seen as one of the many symptoms of the violence of modernity, instead of a project *per se*. Distancing themselves from the Marxist tradition that thought of the Jewish persecutions as an attempt by the dominant classes to divert the attention of the proletariat from the class struggle, the Frankfurt philosophers imagined a world divided

between fascists and anti-fascists, describing the former as alienated individuals.

In this severe criticism of Western civilization there was no space for the analysis of anti-Jewish persecutions. As shown, none of its members gave an interpretation of the relationship between antisemitism and the regimes that promoted them, nor did they ask the reasons why the Jews in particular became the victims of genocide. The Jewish question was thus reabsorbed into an encompassing vision whose m1ain objective was to overcome capitalist society, consumerism, and alienation. As Hannah Arendt wrote, it was possible to "speak of antisemitism without mentioning the Jews". This statement can be broadened to include the left-wing intellectuals from the Sixties and the Seventies that have been discussed in this paper (Arendt 1999: 9).

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Avanti! and the Memory of the Shoah (1961–1967)

Bianca Maria Dematteis

The paper focuses on how the Italian socialist magazine *Avanti!*[1] constructed the memory of the Shoah in the years between the Eichmann trial and the Six-Day War (La Rovere 2007: 95–160; Tarquini 2007: 161–232). The research explores how the newspaper treated the Shoah, and how it regarded the role of Italians in creating and spreading antisemitism, and in the deportations. The analysis follows three strands: the involvement of Italians, as emerged during the Adolf Eichmann trial; the figure of extermination camps survivors; and the anti-Judaism tradition of the Catholic Church.

[1] The newspaper was founded in 1896, on 31 October 1926 it was suspended. In June 1944 the Rome edition and in April 1945 Milan edition resumed publication. Between 1960 and 1967, the directors were: Giovanni Pieraccini; Riccardo Lombardi; Francesco De Martino; Gaetano Arfé and Flavio Orlani.

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The Eichmann Trial

The Eichmann trial, the first trial to underline the specifically Jewish aspect of the event is considered, even in Italy, a watershed moment for the construction of the memory of the Shoah (Pisanty 2012; Bidussa 2009; Consonni 2004: 65–75; Wieviorka 1998; Cesarani 2005).

The *Avanti!* followed the stages of the trial through its correspondent Harry Ferguson, recounting testimonies and lingering on the most violent and brutal details (Friedländer 1982: 21–26, 48–49).[2]

A month after the start of the trial, which had begun on April 1961 at the Community Centre of Jerusalem, the *Beit Ha'am*, the «Italian leg» of the trial got underway (Crescenzi 2014: 12). Italy had already come up in the trial and in the newspaper, especially in regards of how the Nazi did not trust the Italians, and the latter's resistance at persecuting the Jews.[3] Hulda Cassuto Campagnano, the only Italian witness amongst the 111 that appeared in front of the court, was called to the stand during the 36th hearing, on 11 May 1961 (Foa & Crescenzi 2014: III–X, 9–17). On the following day, the *Avanti!* commented: «the Italians opposed the imprisonment of the Jews. The population did not co-operate with the Nazi authorities, and many people were saved»,[4] a position that reflected words of the Jewish woman who had testified.

Cassuto Campagnano (Crescenzi 2014: 59–60), who moved from Milan to Florence in September 1943, escaped deportation with the help of some Florentines and of Tullio Vinay, the resident Waldesian pastor. In her deposition, the woman claimed that before 1943 «we were not worried about our safety, our lives were not in danger, nor was our freedom. Only our financial situation had changed». This testimony, based heavily on personal experience, and from which Cassuto Campagnano drew broader historical judgments, did not reflect the actual condition of Jews during the Fascist regime. Cassuto Campagnano claimed that the «the Jews had already experienced that during Fascism, even after the implementation of the anti-Jewish laws, they could continue their lives as before». In these words, we gain a partial and way too generous image of Italians under the regime, as they are not only cleared of any crime, but

[2] Ferguson, Harry. 1961. A Eichmann non piaceva lo scambio ebrei-camion. *Avanti!*, May 17.

[3] Ferguson, Harry. 1961. "La strage degli innocenti" non turbò il fascista Laval. *Avanti!*, May 10.

[4] Ferguson, Harry. 1961. Gli italiani si opposero alla cattura degli ebrei. *Avanti!*, May 17.

also celebrate as saviours of the Jews. Cassuto Campagnato's deposition finished with a reference to her hatred for the Germans, the help she received from Italian freedom fighters, and the «goodness» of the Italians. She underlined how grateful she was: «all of us, Italian Jews, who survived that hell, owe our lives to the Italians» (Crescenzi 2014: 59–73). The socialist magazine summarizes the woman's deposition by using the cultural stereotype of «the traditional goodness of Italians of every social class».[5]

Neither the deposition, nor the article, problematizes the role of Italians, revealing multiple contradictions. In Cassuto Campagnano' testimony, there are instances that display the participation of Italians, along with their institutions, to an antisemitic climate that allowed for the arrest and deportation of Jewish citizens. The woman spoke of how with her children, nieces and nephews, she had had to flee from the convent where she had found refuge because two Fascist women had discovered her identity. She also mentioned that the Nazis had asked Italian authorities for the lists of Jews and she recounted how a woman and her daughter were arrested when they had gone to renew their food ration card and had been identified as Jews. Despite these episodes, she only spoke of Italians as saviours.

The exceptionality of Italy and of its inhabitants are equally emphasized in the article, and in other commentaries in the newspaper. In producing this judgement of Italians, two factors seem to have been key. First of all, the memory of the racist legislation of 1938 and of the people's complicity was reorganized around the perception of the dramatic events of deportations. Cassuto Campagnano lost her husband and her brother in Auschwitz, as well as a little niece who was born in 1943 and who died in Florence during the Nazi occupation. Later events transformed the memory of previous ones. The oppression of rights and the persecution of lives are not comparable events, and such difference mattered, shaping the image of Italy in 1938 as good, in juxtaposition to the antisemitic practices and massacres of the following years (Foa 2010: 125–131). Secondly, the narrative plays up the personal virtues, qualifying them as belonging to the entire nation and to the whole Italian population, rather that pertaining only to those individuals who risked their lives to help Jewish citizens. This phenomenon can be traced not only in the testimony of Cassuto Campagnano, but also, more explicitly, on the pages of the *Avanti!*.

[5] Ferguson, Harry. 1961. Gli italiani si opposero alla cattura degli ebrei. *Avanti!*, May 17.

Therefore, it can be argued that the recounting of the genocide might be influenced, and at the same time influence, the construction of the myth of the good Italian (Focardi 2013: 113–121; Bidussa 1994), a commonplace narrative that historiographical studies have contested (Consonni 2015: 169–170), but that echoed even outside national borders (Sarfatti 2014: 72; Foa 2014: 92).

On the *Avanti!* there is no indication of the watershed that the Eichmann process represented for the establishment of a Jewish identity connected with the birth of Israel, nor the significance that hosting the trial within the novel national borders meant. In the coverage, the Jews—primarily from Eastern Europe, since 53 of the witnesses that appeared were from Poland or Lithuania (Wieviorka 1998: 101)—were depicted as individual victims in a catalogue of horrors. On the pages of the newspaper, there is no sign of that determination, traced by historians to Italian and European Jews, to demand recognition for their role in the ethos of the Italian and European Resistance, without shame or ambiguity (Consonni 2004: 65–75).

Instead, in the narrations published in the following years and dealing exclusively with Italy and Italian survivors, the Jewish identity is caught only through the political dimension of anti-fascism (Toscano 2007a: 93–103; Rossi-Doria 1998). The different national origin determines different narrations: the Jews from Eastern Europe are victims, Italian Jews are among the heroes of Resistance.

Survivors and Memory

The Italian Shoah and the Italian Jews who survived the Holocaust appear on the pages of the *Avanti!* in accounts that treat the genocide as if it was an epiphenomenon of the Resistance. The stories of deportation of Italian Jews are framed within larger narratives on the fight against Nazis and Fascists. The Jews are, on the newspaper, all but witnesses, whose words are either transcribed or translated. In both cases, transcription or translation, many ambiguities arise that speak of a forced attribution of intentions and identities, and that make the survivor a carrier of universal and political stances, not just a witness of facts, but a witness of a situation of testimony (Wieviorka 1998: 96).

Only rarely the newspaper lets the Italian victims of deportation speak. The most striking example of this[6] is an interview to three Roman Jews, Sabbatino Finzi,[7] Romeo Salmoni[8] and Luciano Camerino,[9] who survived Auschwitz. The interview appeared on the *Avanti!* to mark the twentieth anniversary of the raid of the ghetto of 16 October 1943 (Picciotto Fargion 1979; Baumeister, Osti Guerrazzi, Procaccia 2016; Pezzetti: 2013; Antonucci, Procaccia, Rigano, Spizzichino 2006), when the SS, with the help of the Italian police who provided lists and addresses of the Jews (Picciotto 1991: 881), ravaged the oldest and largest Jewish community in Italy.

The third page of 16 October 1963 issue of the *Avanti!* is fully dedicated to a commemoration of the raid. Giuseppe Pedercini wrote a historical article providing the context, in which he names as harbingers of the raid the roles and actions of Nazi soldiers Herbert Kappler and Theodor Dannecker (Klinkhammer 2016: 41–61). Along with it, he also mentions the use of lists of Roman Jews provided to the Nazis by the police stations, as well as the intervention of spies and of «Fascists of Palazzo Braschi» (Osti Guerrazzi 2017: 66, 119–126; Osti Guerrazzi 2004), who became very aggressive in their search for Jews. After the raid, the deportation of 1022 (Antonucci, Procaccia: 2017: 27) people began on 18 October from Tiburtina Station in Rome to Auschwitz. Only 16 (Antonucci 2016: 87–108). of them survived the Shoah. The newspaper offers some data, and states that «no child ever returned». The article distinguishes between the responsibility of the institutions and the altruistic behaviour of the people, who had been keen to help the Jews in a day that, «like the day of the Fosse Ardeatine massacre», had been «the bloodiest and most horrific in our city, during the Nazi-Fascist occupation». The article concludes with an exhortation to remember, so that «like Czechoslovakian hero Fucik warned us, we all have to stay alert».[10] Julius Fucik, a Communist from Prague killed by the Nazis in 1943, had recorded his memories in a book published in Italy in 1949

[6] A second example is an autobiographical short story by Eugenio Ravenna, a survivor of Auschwitz; see: 1963. Dal coro della guerra. La Forma del cranio. *Avanti!*, November 15. For Ravenna's biography, see: http://www.nomidellashoah.it/1scheda.asp?id=6650.

[7] http://www.nomidellashoah.it/1scheda.asp?nome=Sabatino&cognome=Finzi&id=2934.

[8] http://www.nomidellashoah.it/1scheda.asp?id=7646.

[9] http://www.nomidellashoah.it/1scheda.asp?id=1684.

[10] Pedercini, Giuseppe. 1963. Contro gli ebrei, contro l'umanità. *Avanti!*, October 16.

(Fučík 1949). The obligation to memory, even in an article dedicated to the deportation of Roman Jews, finds its synthesis in the words of a Czech Resistance fighter, as the Resistance becomes a semantic field in which even the Jewish deportations find the final goal of staying vigilant and remembering. On the pages of the newspaper, the deported prisoners and the Resistance fighters participated to the same tragic events, but only the latter are granted the opportunity of making sense of the experience and pass it down to posterity.

On the same page, there is an article by Alberto Ninotti, where «the survivors of the ghetto» give their account. Their narration begins on 16 October and it proceeds chronologically, from the raid, to the train journey and the sorting in Auschwitz. Afterwards, the stories lose their temporal sequence (Langer 1991: 173–175; Langer 1995), and the survivors' non-linear and not chronological memory focuses on images and episodes, like the loss of family members, the hunger, the diseases, the exhaustion, the deaths and the torture. Romeo Salmoni also mentions «the Auschwitz revolt, when a small number of desperate souls, the gas chambers operators, rebelled» (Venezia 2007; Gradowski 2002).[11]

The article brings to light the fact, fairly unexplored in the rest of the magazine, that the survivors had had difficulties in finding avenues where they could share their experiences. For Sabatino Finzi and Romeo Salmoni this was the first interview, the article states, stressing the exceptionality of the occasion.

Analysing the article, it becomes apparent that communication between the journalist and the witnesses was not straightforward, as the survivors struggled to discuss their experiences, thus producing «a scanty narration that attempts to erase the most horrific events». The journalist had to push the interviewees, who required time to find the words. The gap between memory and spoken word is not unbridgeable: «Sabatino Finzi remembers everything of those horrifying days, hour by hour. But he does not want to speak about it». Finzi only shared with the journalist very minimal memories, based on two images: «Write about how we had to wait at dawn for two hours straight for the arrival of the German Corporal for the headcount. Or of when I saw six or seven babies being unloaded from a livestock cart, placed in a huge cloth, tied up like a bundle and thrown on a truck». Finzi used the imperative to force the journalist to write in a way

[11] 1963. Ninotti, Alberto. Non è facile parlare, non è facile dimenticare, *Avanti!*, October 16.

that could stress the truthfulness of his testimony. He wanted the article to account for his presence and for his role of eyewitness: «write of what I saw». In these words, we can ascertain his awareness about the importance of his memories that, however, require a middleman to be spread in the right, evocative way. Luciano Camerino, the third interviewee, explains their difficulties at sharing what they saw, and the problem with trying to explain the reality of extermination camps:

> It is not just the horror of those days. It is not just the memory of a sense of desperation that you want to chase away. The problem is that what happened out there cannot be described. Many tried, in newspapers, books and movies. But no matter how much we try, the horror of those days is bigger than any word or image can convey.

The journalist frames these statements within a moral exhortation to uphold the duty of memory, which is a recurrent theme on the pages of the *Avanti!*. Ninotti ignores Camerino's reflection on how the experience of the deported cannot be conveyed and concludes the article with an encouragement: «Remembering is a duty […] Nazism cannot and shall not be forgotten».[12]

The morality of memory is represented by the picture of a woman accompanying the article. The caption reads: «A working-class woman from Rome, during a protest against a recent Fascist demonstration». The figure of the woman hints at Czechoslovakian hero Fucik, and the image seems to confirm the hypothesis that, for the Italian Socialists the significance of these testimonies rested in how they could aid the battles that they were fighting at the time the article was written. There is even an overlapping of Resistance and Shoah, as the words and categories used to speak of the former, like heroism, fight/struggle, and sacrifice, are applied to the experiences of the deported Jews, and to add further significance to the words of the survivors.

In December 1966, on the 70th anniversary of publication of the newspaper, the *Avanti!* published a dossier on the history of the magazine which contained a commemoration of fourteen newspaper employees who had perished during the Second World War. The list of names was paired with information about the job positions of the departed, and the

[12] Ninotti, Alberto. 1963. Non è facile parlare, non è facile dimenticare, *Avanti!*, October 16.

circumstances of their passing, whether it was as a partisan, or in the concentration camps (Dachau, Buchenwald, Mauthausen) between 1943 and 1945. The pages remembered those «editors, collaborators, propagators of the *Avanti!* when it was a clandestine magazine, who fell while they were fighting from within the dangerous trenches of the newspaper».[13] Of these fourteen people, five were killed while fighting with the Resistance, and nine where taken to the aforementioned concentration camps, never to return. Therefore, these deaths and the history of the newspaper, reveal how the *Avanti!*, in its editorial choices, was greatly influenced by the specific experiences of the anti-fascist struggle, by the participation to the Resistance, and by the political deportations. When analysing how the newspaper dealt with the Shoah, and his difficulty in recognizing the specificity of Jewish deportation, we cannot ignore that fact that the *Avanti!* had its own history with the Nazi occupation.

Also, the Socialist Party had a «qualified and long-standing Jewish base». Historiographical research concerned with the relationship between Jews and Socialists has shown how, after the end of World War II, and at least until the Six-Day War, the Socialist Party had been «understanding the values of the new Jewish identity, as based on anti-Fascism and the Resistance, as well as on the newly funded reality of Israel» (Toscano 2007b: 18). On the issues of the *Avanti!* that commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the Liberation, there are two examples of this encounter between the account of the Shoah and the description of the anti-Fascist war. On 25 April 1965 issue, a whole page is dedicated to the words of Luciano Bolis, a partisan of *Giustizia e Libertà*.[14] On the page there are also two separate sections, one filled with the lyrics of *Fischia il vento* (a partisan song), and the other with *Shemà* by Primo Levi. The previous year, also for the Liberation anniversary, a new column had made its appearance, entitled *Il segnalibro della Resistenza* (The Bookmark of the Resistance).[15] It contained a list of texts, with summaries, dedicated to the Resistance, a library of sorts for the Socialist reader who wanted to learn more about the 1943–1945 period. Amongst the selected book there appeared *I ventitre giorni della città di Alba* (Fenoglio 1952), *Diario Partigiano* (Prospero 1956), *Lettere di condannati a morte della Resistenza*

[13] 1966. I caduti dell'Avanti!. *Avanti!*, December 30.

[14] 1965. Non per odio per la dignità dell'uomo. Il mio granello di sabbia di Luciano Bolis. *Avanti!*, April 25.

[15] 1964. Il segnalibro della Resistenza. *Avanti!*, April 25.

italiana (Malvezzi, Pirelli 1952) *Si fa presto a dire fame* (Caleffi 1954), and *Storia della Resistenza italiana* (Battaglia 1953). *Se questo è un uomo* (Levi 1947) and *Perché gli altri dimenticano* by Bruno Piazza (Piazza 1956) also made the list. Levi's book is not discussed in depth, since the *Avanti!* editors believed it to be known enough, but they chose nonetheless to publish a quote from it about the "Muslims" (Agamben 1998: 37–80, 154–160; Levi Della Torre February 2000: 16–17; Levi Della Torre 2003: 214–223; Furci 2017) of Auschwitz. Qualifying information is provided instead about Piazza's work, including a bio of the writer describing how he was Jewish and had survived Auschwitz to then write a text aimed at stressing the importance of memory. Piazza and Levi were amongst the authors of the Resistance celebrated on the newspaper and their name is connected with the Italy's Liberation day. The incapacity to grasp the specificity of the Jewish deportation could cause ambiguity. An understanding that connects the Resistance with the Shoah, making the latter a manifestation of the former, is problematic. The account of the twentieth anniversary of the raid of the ghetto regards the Shoah as a parcel of the fight against Nazism and Fascism, highlighting the difficulties of the survivors to speak and verbalise the trauma. The survivors do not consider themselves heroes. In the pages of the *Avanti!*, there seems to be a mosaic of research of identities that it is hard to discern, especially when the newspaper does not let the survivors speak for themselves, but rather speaks for them, as it is apparent in the analysis of the reviews of texts meant to conserve the memory of the Shoah, that increased in numbers in the 1960s.

The 1960s were a time of great production for Holocaust-related texts, as not only testimonies found their way onto the page (Bravo 2003: 127–136; Bravo, Jalla 1994), but also reprints of older volumes (Focardi 2018: 119), translations (Reitlinger 1962; Shirer 1962; Arendt 1964; Bettelheim 1965), fiction (Bassani 1962; Ginzburg 1963; Levi 1963) and Italian historiography appeared (De Felice 1961; Collotti 1962; Collotti 1963; Morelli 1965; Donati 1965). Between the end of the 1950s and the early 1960s there was a change, both in terms of quality and quantity, in the attention that the Holocaust was getting (Gordon 2013: 87). Memoirs in particular increased in numbers, and by the end of the 1960s there were more than thirty of them published, with more than double the number of the ones that went into printing in the 1950s (Bravo, Jalla 1994: 69). The memory of the Shoah made its way into civil society via culture and the media taking various shapes, encompassing the private trauma and the

memory of small groups: it is during this decade that for the first time the Holocaust enters the public sphere and in the public discourse (Gordon 2013: 57–58, 98).

The *Avanti!* paid attention to these shifts, reviewing testimonies and novels, and keeping tabs on the Italian and international historiographical production. The newspaper discussed five memoirs in particular, of those published at the time: *Ideologia della morte. Documenti per un profilo del razzismo nazista e per una storia della Resistenza europea* by Domenico Tarizzo, published in 1962; *Notte sull'Europa* by Fernando Etnasi and Roberto Forti, printed in 1963 by the Roman chapter of the ANED (National Association of Survivors of Deportation); *Tu passerai per il camino* by Vincenzo Pappalettera, published in 1965 and winner of the Bancarella Prize in 1966; *La condizione sperimentale* by Laura Conti, published in 1965; and *I vivi e i morti* by Mino Micheli, published in 1967.

Ideologia della morte and *Notte sull'Europa* are two anthologies, gathering documents, testimonies, and historiography. The first of these two books «was the first overview ever published, at least in Italy, that brought together historiographical documentations and the list of the 1.188 concentration and extermination camps» (Consonni 2015: 177). Roberto Forti, the Communist co-author of the second book, had been deported himself. The other three books are memoirs and recount the experiences of people deported to Mauthausen and Bozen. Luana Conti was also a Communist, while Pappalettera[16] and Micheli[17] were Socialists. Therefore, the memory represented was primarily that of political prisoners.

An examination of the reviews of these books[18] leads to various considerations. The reviews were analysed by departing from questions around the role of the memory of deportation for this political culture, about the role of the survivor, and about the ways in which the persecuted Jews were described. In terms of the social function of memory, the analysis reveals a trend that clashes with the most widespread historiographical account. In

[16] Spina, Giorgio. 1965. Tu passerai per il camino. *Avanti!*, July 25.

[17] Scaringi, Carlo. 1967. I socialisti contro Hitler. *Avanti!*, September 30.

[18] About *Notte sull'Europa*: Lannutti, Giancarlo. 1964. L'Europa immersa nella notte nazista. *Avanti!*, February 23; about *Ideologia della morte* Pedullà, Walter. 1965. Tagliacarte. Notte e nebbia. *Avanti!*, July 18; about *Tu passerai per il camino*: Brindesi, Fausto. 1965. Disumana parentesi della storia umana. *Avanti!*, June 13, and Spina, Giorgio. 1965. Tu passerai per il camino, *Avanti!*, July 25; about *La condizione sperimentale*: Castelli, Silvana. 1965. Una scelta definitiva. *Avanti!*, August 26. About *I vivi e i morti*: Scaringi, Carlo. 1967. I socialisti contro Hitler. *Avanti!*, September 30.

the review of *Notte sull'Europa* by Etnasi and Forti of February 1964, and Giorgio Spina's review of *Tu passerai per il camino*, dated 1965, there is no awareness of a silence on Shoah that would have characterized the first fifteen after the war. In the review to Etnasi and Forti, this is manifest:

> In the almost twenty years that have gone by since the Spring of 1945, when the unstoppable advance of the Allies and the Soviets to the heart of Germany revealed to the world the dreadful tragedy of Nazi concentration camps, rivers of ink have been used to describe and denounce the impossible (and yet real) horrors of what has been called «*univers concentrationnaire*», as to address how alien to imagination and reality Hitler's shady and inhuman dictatorship was for pre-Nazi Europe.

Every new testimony, «even if repeating things that have already been said» strengthens the memory of the Shoah. Humanity as a whole needs to remember, «because, to quote Umberto Saba, after Maidaneck and the horrors of the Third Reich, all of us, victims and perpetrators, are morally diminished».[19] According to the newspaper, even if Maidaneck's extermination camp, concentration camps, and racial and political deportations had been widely investigated, their memory has to be an admonition still today. Giorgio Spina's review of *Tu passerai per il camino* touches upon the same theme. Spina, considering the larger number of both Italian and foreign texts on the «camps of death», reveals his doubts «if, since so much has been written, there will be new material to publish». Pappalettera's book dismisses any doubt in this regard. His testimony was necessary, and the strength of his argument is based on the horrible exceptionality of the «many and different» experiences, and on «the suffering humanity locked in the recent hells of the camps».[20] Here he did not refer to the single individuals, but rather to how a suffering humanity is the victim of Nazi oppression, following an interpretative pattern that was widely used in Socialist political culture (La Rovere 2007: 121). The role of memory, and its function as warning, is central in the pages dedicated to the survivors.

Testimonies have recognized status for the Socialist magazine. Hence the image of the historical witness, who needs to share what she has seen and endured, is manufactured, and her writing has a specific urgency and forward-looking intention.

[19] Lannutti, Giancarlo. 1964. L'Europa immersa nella notte nazista. *Avanti!*, February 23.
[20] Ibidem.

> Le témoignage historique, lui, s'adresse aux contemporains, à tous les contemporains ; et, par delà, aux générations futures. Sa portée intentionnelle n'est pas dirigée vers telle ou telle institution, mais il s'adresse à qui voudra bien le recevoir ; il a une portée potentiellement universelle. C'est la dimension monumentaire du témoignage historique.[21]

Through eyewitnesses' narrations, the past can be documented, and people's consciousness can be influenced for the sake of the future. Here the political stance is evident. Historiographical accounts, that at the time were starting to develop, were seen as inadequate. The survivor is seen as the bearer of truth, and only she can talk about events she witnessed, with a novel and unique authority. In addition to being the voice of truth and create, with her voice, a history that impacts the present, the survivor is also the one who can bring forth accusations and the possibility of judgement.

Memoirs, intended here as «literature born out of deportations to Nazi-Fascist extermination camps»,[22] were already considered a literary genre (Langer 1991; Lacoste, Détue janvier-février 2016: 3–15; Rastier septembre 2010: 108–129; Furci 2017). For the *Avanti!*, the three principal authors were Vincenzo Pappalettera for *Tu passerai per il camino*, Piero Caleffi with *Si fa presto a dire fame* and Primo Levi with *Se questo è un uomo*, works that «are influenced, in some ways, by Nineteenth century memorials and autobiographies». However, they were considered different from them because they presented «a much stronger need, on the writer's part, to adhere to reality, which is investigated without the mediation of religion, morality, or intellectualism». Pappalettera's merit was to have grasped «the choral like character […] not the individual deportees, but rather the deported as a whole, and not the individual jailers, but the jailers as an entity».[23] The goal of the newspaper is to look for continuity of experience, rather than analysing the multiple reasons behind deportations.

The beginning of the review of *I vivi e i morti* by Socialist Mino Micheli, is quite enlightening in this regard. The first few words are dedicated to «the more than 8000 […] Italians deported by the Nazis and the Fascists and sent to Mauthausen's extermination camp». Only «a few dozens» of

[21] Renaud Dulong, *Qu'est-ce qu'un témoin historique?*, Vox Poetica, Link: http://www.vox-poetica.org/t/articles/dulong.html.

[22] Brindesi, Fausto. 1965. Disumana parentesi della storia umana. *Avanti!*, June 13.

[23] Ibidem.

them returned to Italy, while the rest had to suffer the same fate of «other Italians, other freedom fighters, and of millions of other innocent people who were dragged from all across Europe to the camps of death».[24] In this passage, the differences among the deported are fully erased to the benefit of a collective tragedy. In some passages of the *Avanti!*, the deported are seen as equal to the victims of Nazi massacres. Individuals make their appearance in lists: «Sara, Jewish deportee», caught in the act of «throwing [a letter] from the train of death»; «Clara Cecchini», who escaped Reder's SS Valla di San Terenzo Monti carnage (Fusi, 2016: 267–279; Fulvetti 2009: 214–218); «Guy Poirot», «a baby boy born secretly in Ravensbruck, and smuggled outside of the camp concealed in a bag of laundry»;[25] «the Jewish professor who cannot forget the moment in which his little niece was dragged away from her mother's arms towards certain death by the German officials».[26] In these reviews, Jews are only mentioned sporadically. They are but individual cases that describe the suffering of the victims of the violence of the «"Aryan" butchers».[27]

This perspective, which conflates the Shoah and the experiences of the Jews into the Resistance, is partially expressed in those articles that try to make sense of the deaths occurred in the camps. According to the newspaper, it is only in death that the «complete witness» finds liberation. In a review of *La condizione sperimentale*, the journalist, while using the false analogy that reduces prisoners to an animal-like state (Ravenna 2014: 102–124; Chaumont 1997: 76–82), taken to their deaths «like blinded beasts», claims that the victims, rather than their killers, have «history and life on their side». She quotes a passage of the book in which death is clearly transformed: «because death is ours, and defeat is yours, because we have life and history, while you are left astray».[28] At the same time, the tragedy of death seems to belong to the Resistance, encompassing all prisoners. Death is given meaning and made understandable. Here there is an evident contradiction that sees the deported, on the one hand, as passive beings taken to their slaughter, while on the other hand their deaths is given meaning by projecting it into the future as a victory over their killers. The writing style used to speak about the camps has that «grammar of

[24] Scaringi, Carlo. 1967. I socialisti contro Hitler. *Avanti!*, September 30.

[25] Lannutti, Giancarlo. 1964. L'Europa immersa nella notte nazista. *Avanti!*, February 23.

[26] Castelli, Silvana. 1965. "La condizione sperimentale" di Laura Conti. Una scelta definitiva. *Avanti!*, August 1965.

[27] Lannutti, Giancarlo. 1964. L'Europa immersa nella notte nazista. *Avanti!*, February 23.

[28] Castelli, Silvana. 1965. Una scelta definitiva. *Avanti!*, August 26.

heroism and martyrdom» that gives intentionality to the victims, and, as Langer says, «protect the idea that the Nazi assault on the body and spirit of its victims did no fundamental damage to our cherished belief that, even in the most adverse circumstances, character is instinctively allied to the good» (Langer 1991: 162).

On the *Avanti!*, the victims' identities are transformed to fit both the present, and categories—the Resistance, and Nazi-Fascism—that are acceptable for the reader, and that can be used against the enemies of the times.

Even the President of the Italian Republic, social-democrat Giuseppe Saragat, while visiting Auschwitz in October 1965, unable to name all the victims of the camp, decided to only mention Vittoria Nenni, killed in the camp in 1943.[29] This reference to the anti-Fascist daughter of the historical leader of the Italian Socialist Party Pietro Nenni (Colarizi 1994: 48) produces an image of Auschwitz, a camp where 6007 Italian Jews were deported (Picciotto 1979: 28–34; Mantelli, Tranfaglia 2009: 23–88),[30] as the epitome of anti-Fascist and anti-Nazi repression. Saragat's intention, however, might have been to pay homage to Pietro Nenni and to stress anti-Fascist values at a time when the PSI and the PSD were re-uniting (Colarizi 1994: 316–324).[31]

The Anti-Judaism Tradition of the Catholic Church

The *Avanti!*'s interest in the Catholic Church and, in particular, in the Church's relationship with the Jewish people, is the result not only of the politics of left-wing governments,[32] but also of the occurrence of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) (Alberigo 2012; Alberigo 1995–2001).

The Second Vatican Council represented a sharp rupture in the tradition of Catholic anti-Judaism, and the *Avanti!* welcomed it, as it introduced its reader the document *De Judaeis* (Alberigo 1995–2001). For the newspaper this represented a large shift, as «religious antisemitism», considered «one of the most medieval remnants of Catholicism», «is about to

[29] 1965. Tre lezioni da Auschwitz. *Avanti!*, October 17.

[30] From Italy, 6806 jews were deported (837 survivors). From Dodecaneso 1820 jews were deported, only 180 between them survived.

[31] In october 1966, Psi and Psdi united to form Socialist Unified Party.

[32] The first centre-left governement, led by Christian Democrat Amintore Fanfani and with the external support of Psi, began in February 1962.

be expelled by the Council».[33] In this account, Pope John XXIII (Alberigo 1987; Melloni 2009), who died in June 1963, is the harbinger of this positive change of attitude towards the Jews. *Avanti!* has positive words[34] for the Pope who, unlike most of the Italian episcopate, had not been, in principle, against an alliance between socialists and Catholics that had been under discussion at that time (Riccardi 1987: 135–173; Miccoli 1987: 175–209).

The declaration *Nostra Aetate* (Stefani 1998) was indeed a break from the past, and in October 1965, the *Avanti!* declared «that, for an institution that until John XXIII prayed to God against "the evil Jews", this step forward is exceptionally important for the benefit of modern consciousness».[35] The Church's rejection of its own anti-Judaic past is a theme that the newspaper considers even in relation to Rolf Hochhuth's play *The Deputy, a Christian Tragedy* (Hochhuth 1963). The play, first appeared in Italy in 1964, was censored by the government. The *Avanti!* mentioned that the *pièce* was showed abroad, while the Roman performance was first interrupted and then banned.[36] At the centre of the debate, for the newspaper, there should not be the role and silence of Pius XII (Miccoli 2007), the main themes of the play, but rather the limited liberalism of Catholics and Communists. The *Avanti!* condemns the Vatican's narrow-minded attitude, since «John XXIII's Church and the Council have shown unexpected vitality, and it is unclear why Catholics should be this worried».[37] It also highlights the fracture with the Communists, who were, according to the Socialists, the ones truly responsible for the situation: «the Communists better remember that with their vote to Article 7 they made a huge mistake, whose consequences we are still paying today»,[38] referring to when the Communists voted, unlike the PSI, in favour of the insertion of the Lateran treaties in the Italian Constitution (Agosti 1999: 61) in March 1947.

[33] D'Ascia, Ugo. 1963. Nessuna colpa pesa sugli ebrei afferma il Concilio. *Avanti!*, November 9.

[34] D'Ascia, Ugo. 1966. La scommessa di Giovanni XXIII. *Avanti!*, December 30.

[35] D'Ascia, Ugo. 1965. L'antisemitismo uscito condannato. *Avanti!*, October 1965.

[36] Lemmi, D. A. 1963. «Ignobile! Scandaloso!» Gridavano in loggione. *Avanti!*, December 11; Pedullà, Walter. 1967. Il Vicario popolare. *Avanti!*, March 12; 1964. Appassionato dibattito intorno al Vicario. *Avanti!*, March 27; 1964. Io rimasi zitto e Pio XII tacque. *Avanti!*, June.

[37] D'Ascia, Ugo. 1964. Fanno silenzio intorno al Vicario. *Avanti!*, March 26.

[38] 1965. La vicenda del Vicario: un esempio da non imitare. *Avanti!*, March 18.

Conclusions

The short analysis presented here does not cover all that could be said about the debate on the *Avanti!* on the memory of the Shoah. However, it is possible to identify some fundamental aspects of how this memory was constructed. The articles about the Eichmann process reveal not only the stereotype of the good Italian, but also a tendency to externalize (Baumeister 2016: 9–20) the history of the Shoah. The genocide is portrayed as a history of others, concerning primarily Eastern Europe, and Italians are not seen as among the perpetrators.

On the *Avanti!*, the history of Italian Jews leads to the identification of the survivor as the bearer of truth, and displays a tendency to interpret deportations as a form of resistance to Nazism (Focardi 2018: 122). The Resistance is both the context and the ideological background on which the Italian racial deportee is imagined. Such reasoning has specific consequences, while also revealing two attitudes that are distinctive to the Left when it comes to Jewish culture.

First of all, thinking of the Shoah as part of the Resistance implies affording intentionality to the victims. Posterity grants meaning to the deaths that took place in the ovens of the extermination camps, and the aim is to bestow on the Shoah a pedagogical and political value. There is a tendency to speak for the witnesses, and to fill in their silences and the aporias of their accounts.

This incapacity to grasp the specificity of racial deportations produces a «forced assimilation of the dead», which is a most manifest consequence of a «spirit of assimilation» and of a «spirit of the majority» (Levi Della Torre 1989: 57–58; Luzzatto Voghera 2005: 249–264) that voids the differences of minorities to inscribe them into the majority. As a consequence, distinctions are removed, and similarities are overvalued (Fubini 1989: 79–83). Thus, when socialist culture views Jewish identity as anti-Fascist as a consequence of Nazi and Fascist persecution, it is, in fact, diminishing and assimilating that very identity. Only through this reference to anti-Fascism, Jewish deportations become part of national history. This attribution of a political identity to the victims of racial persecution renders the Shoah part of Italian history. The most evident example of this is Saragat's mention of Vittoria Nenni, whom he used to remember all the Italian victims of Auschwitz, even if the camp had been the prime destination of Italian Jews, while only a small number of political prisoners had been deported there. This way, the Jewish reality is nullified, and, for the sake of homogeneity, the Jewish

deportations fall from view. Auschwitz is turned into the field of the anti-Fascists.

Finally, the analysis of the discussion on the Catholic Church highlights some other elements of this culture, more secular and anti-clerical than Marxist, and that looked at European social democracies, rather than at the USSR (Colarizi 1994: 327).

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Umberto Terracini: His Commitment to the Memory of the Shoah, His Relationship with Israel and His Fight Against Antisemitism

Marta Nicolo

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to draw attention to the commitment of Umberto Terracini (1895–1983), one of the protagonists of Italian Communism, to the Jewish issues. My aim is not so much to highlight the exceptionality of his contribution, but rather to restore depth to a peculiar political dedication, and to recall little-known aspects of this interesting Italian politician. In his youth, Terracini joined the Socialist Party, becoming a close collaborator of Antonio Gramsci and Palmiro Togliatti, and alongside them in 1921 he was one of the founders of the Italian Communist Party. Contrary to positions that uncritically supported the USSR, Terracini did not feel constrained by the myth of Soviet Russia, always having the courage to claim his own autonomy from Moscow's directives. Because of this, he paid a price both at a human and political

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level. Elected Member of Parliament in 1921 and 1924, he was arrested in 1926 following the Fascist victory, and sentenced by the Special Court to twenty-two years and nine months of imprisonment. After having served eleven years of his sentence in Rome, in 1937 he was sent to confinement first to the Island of Ponza, and then to Santo Stefano, where he was finally freed in 1943. During his imprisonment, he criticised the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, which led to a period of marginalisation and isolation from the Party, to then be expelled while he was in exile. These penalties caused him "moral sufferings far superior to those inflicted by his imprisonment" (Barbagallo 1998: 134), as he wrote personally to Palmiro Togliatti, the leader of PCI, on 5 January 1944. Despite this, Terracini during his long political career never stopped to put himself on the line for causes in which he believed, even at the cost of having to face hard clashes and judgments. His conduct, that often diverged from Party lines, has been the object of studies, but it is Terracini himself who offered an assessment of his long experience as a communist in a statement to journalist Mario Pendinelli, curator of Terracini's book *When we became Communists*:

> Even when I disagreed with certain party positions I always avoided being led, for the sake of my ideas, to lengths that would make me definitively break away from it. In this case, even if had safeguarded my ideas, I would have condemned them to sterility, to impotence. I would have betrayed my nature as a militant. I would not even have saved my conscience. This is the key to understand my conduct. (Pendinelli 1981: 154–155)

The Fight to Preserve the Memory of the Shoah

One aspect that has almost been completely ignored by historiography is Terracini's attention to Jewish issues. While he considered his attention to the Jewish world an essential dimension of his communism, to say that such interest was in full harmony with the tradition and history of the Italian Communist Party would be a mistake. He was indeed Jewish, but to recall his Jewish roots, as some do, is not enough. In fact, in the leading group of the PCI, others had similar ancestry,—think for example of Emilio Sereni—but not for this did they manifest Terracini's openness. His Jewish heritage and education made him attuned to that world, favouring understandings that Gentiles did not have. However, Terracini was an exception because he always had a leading role, being one of the founding members of the PCI, a father in the first constituent parliament, the President of the Constituent Assembly, and a Communist senator for

eleven terms. In many ways, he was a true forerunner, as for instance in conserving the memory of racial persecutions against the Jews. In 1945, as President of the ANPPIA (National Association of Persecuted Italian Politicians), he conceived and financed the monument dedicated to the "Fallen in the Nazi death camps" in Milan. The monument, designed by BBPR architectural firm, was erected in 1946 within the Monumental Cemetery, a place of significant public relevance, taking on an even deeper meaning because of the year in which it was planned and commissioned (Nicolo 2018: 21). The war had just ended, and the country had to be rebuilt. The nation, the State, and the very idea of Italy had been subjected to strenuous hardships. In this context, the echoes of the persecutions suffered by the deportees were still weak in the country, and the news that gradually emerged was incomplete and fragmentary. The liberation of Auschwitz on 27 January 1945 seemed like a footnote in history, if compared to the news of the Yalta conference, just like the liberation of Dachau had been in comparison to the suicide of Hitler and Goebbels (Gordon 2013: 11).

In 1951, Terracini also began his cultural and institutional battle against the reintegration of Nazi criminals by firmly supporting no statute of limitations for the crimes against humanity they had committed. He presented numerous and frequent instances in Parliament long before Italian society had begun to address the problem in conjunction with the trail of Nazi hierarch Adolf Eichmann in April 1961 (Gordon 2013). For instance, in 1952 he made a motion against the release of Albert Kesserling, the former German marshal who had been, first, commander of aviation during the invasion of Poland, then commander-in-chief of the Mediterranean sector and, after 8 September 1943, the leader of the German forces in Italy. At the end of the conflict he had been accused of war crimes, in particular of the massacre of 335 Italians at the Fosse Ardeatine in March 1944, and of the retaliatory killing of 1087 people at various locations during the Italian campaign (Barnett 1991). His release, justified as a "clemency act", was commented by Terracini as follows:

> in expressing my profound sense of very sad astonishment at the act of indulgence, I cannot but explicitly deplore—each of us do so implicitly—those who, only by virtue of the power they possess, can open and close the doors not only of prisons, but also of the happiness or unhappiness of peoples. I would not want this ill-advised gesture to be intended as a symbolic warning to the world that the inhuman and ruthless methods that already earned this cruel and infamous man the condemnation revoked today, are

> now rehabilitated before men, or even just before those who govern men. And I would have liked that, even if he was granted his freedom, he had at least been condemned to retrace his steps across the Italian lands he had made deserted with his ruthless ferocity, to ask forgiveness from those who still mourn the victims he sacrificed. Instead, he is free! But we are free too, and our freedom allows us to do everything in our power so that such brutal events, like those with which the offender is stained, no longer occur in the world! (Nicolo 2018: 30)

In 1959, Terracini became a member of the Italian Committee promoting the International Monument for Auschwitz. It was set up to help the International Committee (IAC, International Auschwitz Committee) that in 1957 had held a competition to design an official monument to be erected in Auschwitz II (Birkenau). To help the IAC, national support groups arose across Europe, and in Italy an interesting group of personalities with high political and cultural relevance joined the official representative Carlo Levi. Robert Gordon called the Italian organising committee "a sort of snapshot of the cultural field of the Holocaust in Italy in the late Fifties" composed of "an anti-fascist coalition of intellectuals, politicians and groups of former partisans characterized by political ecumenism largely inclined towards the non-communist left" (Gordon 2013: 264–265). The participation of Terracini, at that time a PCI leader, occurred on a personal basis.

On the institutional front, the following year Terracini presented in the Senate a motion condemning the antisemitic demonstrations that occurred in several Italian cities. As a result of the disfigurement of the Synagogue of Cologne, on whose walls swastikas had been drawn, antisemitic phenomena intensified in Italy. In various cities, public buildings, private houses, and monuments were smeared with Nazi symbols. Terracini strongly criticised the Italian government for not having publicly condemned these episodes: "Concerning the silence of the Government every hypothesis is legitimate, since it is truly a silence that I would like to define monstrous" (Terracini 1995: 1885–1902).

The Terracini Law

Terracini was also an exception for the consistency of his scrutiny of Jewish affairs, unlike the sporadic interest shown by many of his comrades and by his Party. If at the end of the war the Jews, until then at the centre of a ferocious campaign, became once again invisible to the general

population, Terracini kept his gaze fixed on them, recognising that Italian society was doing little to reintegrate the persecuted Jewish people, likening them to all the other victims of Fascism. An exemplary case is the long and controversial procedure that led in 1955 to the law on provisions in favour of those who had been politically and racially persecuted, the so-called Terracini Law. During this long process, while victims of Fascist persecution were being discussed, Jews always remained in the background, as nobody talked about them and what they had suffered. The only person disturbing this ambiguity and this paradox, underlining the importance of distancing the specificity of the persecution suffered by the Jews for being Jews, was Terracini (Corradini 2012). Italian society, occupied with a complex economic and moral reconstruction, was not keen on reflecting and elaborating tragedies and lacerations. If the different political currents had not dealt, with a few exceptions, with racial discriminations before the war, after the end of the conflict they were even less inclined or incapable to grasp the specificity of the Fascist persecutions of the Jews, framed instead as part of the violence suffered by all the victims of the regime. For post-war anti-fascism, the Jews had been victims as much as the partisans. However, Terracini was one of the first figures to speak of the Jewish deportees and to encourage a public reflection on them. Thus, he devoted his entire life to extend the Law named after him and defend it, and to help those who needed compensation to overcome bureaucratic quibbles. Terracini followed almost daily many cases, and received many demonstrations of gratitude and respect for his commitment. On 7 April 1974 he got the following letter from Umberto Palazzese:

> In this letter, I inform you that I have received notice that my request for financial support as a victim of Fascist persecution has been accepted. I do not know how to thank you for your interest, but if by any chance you come in the vicinity of Roseto, it would be a pleasure if you visited me for dinner. (Nicolo 2018: 65)

It is important to note that for such issues there was also a special office of the ANPPIA, but many people preferred to ask directly to Terracini.

Terracini and the State of Israel

Another example of Terracini's attention to the history of the Jewish people was his position on Israel. In Parliament, he was spokesperson for PCI's request to the Italian Government to formally recognise the State of

Israel and express solidarity for the war being fought at the time. In this regard, he intervened in Parliament on 25 May 1948 to ask the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs why the Italian government had not yet proceeded to recognise the state of Israel proclaimed almost two weeks before. See ASMAE. Archivio Storico Ministero degli Affari Esteri. Appunto per la Direzione Generale Affari Politici, 27 maggio 1948. Segreteria Generale 1945–1949, b. 3. In the autumn of 1948, he spoke against the mobilisation of Catholics in support of the claims made by the Holy See about Jerusalem:

> Is it not here in Rome, ladies and gentlemen, that with the clever complacency of the Government, for many months there was the ridiculous clowning of the recruitment of a body of new crusaders to defend the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem against Jewish "barbarity"? All the newspapers spoke of the noble men who had already ordered their officer uniform for the new army from the best tailors. And it took the Jewish victory in Palestine to put an end to that ignoble foolish comedy. (Terracini 1995: 468)

And a few months later, he also spoke courageously against the Vatican:

> Vatican City is an independent state that does not accept orders from anyone, but gives them to others. And therefore the Vatican Radio is in control of broadcasting what it wants and what it believes most useful to the interests of the Vatican government. But how can we forget that for a long time now the Vatican Radio has specialised in broadcasts that I will say, are not only anti-Jewish, but antisemitic, making it one of the worst sources of that moral plague that has already upset the world, and with which some people, not unknown, would like to upset the world again? On the other hand, in Italy itself, antisemitism, which the Constitution bans, can peacefully make its way unopposed into environments that should be considered most hostile and unassailable by this disgrace. (Nicolo 2018: 90, Giovannelli 2000, Zanini 2012, Ferrari 1991)

Throughout the Fifties and the Sixties, when the PCI had already distanced itself from Israel, Terracini continued to support the Jewish State, soon diverging from his Party's line, and becoming the most authoritative exponent of this dissent. On the eve of the Six-Day War, he visited Israel and on his return he wrote a long account of the trip for the party leadership. For him, nothing yet foreshadowed the following tragic developments, and he believed that Israel had no real intention of taking a military

initiative because of the enormous disparity of forces (two and a half million inhabitants in Israel against over fifty million inhabitants in the Arab states united in a federation). He believed that it was not in the interest of the Israeli government, which cared too much about safeguarding the country's productive and civil structures. Rather, the worsening of the situation and the danger of a war was, for Terracini, to be attributed to an initiative ordered by the Arabs, convinced that the strong international tension favoured their attempt to liquidate the Jewish State, in the name of an exasperated "nationalistic chauvinism and religious fanaticism" (Nicolo 2018: 99).

Terracini immediately condemned Moscow's pro-Arab pressures, and openly defended the Israeli state, in one of the moments of maximum subordination of the PCI to Moscow. A year after the Six-Day War, he wrote an article in which he closely analysed the conflict, and emphasised its causes and consequences in Mediterranean politics. According to the article, even after a more in-depth analysis of the facts, the conflict had been born out of the tensions festered by the logic of opposing blocs, rather than by the direct involvement in the conflict of the two superpowers. The US and the USSR were not to be considered the main culprits, but neither was Israel. Everything was instead attributable to Egypt:

> One must be critical of those who, due to their revolutionary vocation, have taken sides in favour of the Arab world in the June war. Leaving aside vacuous controversies, always present when discussing wars on who fired the first shot, the very serious responsibilities of Egypt for the outbreak of the conflict are unquestionable. (Marzano & Simoni 2010: 133)[1]

Terracini's position was therefore clearly in antithesis with the line taken by the PCI. On 10 March 1968, he took part on personal grounds to a conference on the Middle East, and in the same month he received a letter from the Committee of the Left for Negotiating Peace in the Middle East, a French organisation set up to support the peace process in Israel. The Committee wrote to him to express its fondness, and to congratulate him on his courage in defending Israel (Nicolo 2018: 109). Personalities of culture as Vladimir Jankélévitch, Bernard Kouchner, Clara Malraux, Edgar Morin, Gilles Martinet, and Jorge Semprun were supporters of this

[1] Terracini, Umberto. 1969. La crisi arabo-israeliana. *Quaderni del Medio Oriente*. 1 (3–4): 15–17.

French organisation that in Italy collaborated with the organisation of Guido Fubini and Primo Levi in Turin, and the group of Ascoli in Rome. In the following weeks, the French Committee produced a document inviting the Arab countries, Israel, and the Palestinian people «to renounce war and to recognise the legitimate existence of the State of Israel and the right of the Palestinian people to an independent state». The document was signed, among others, by Riccardo Lombardi, Nerio Nesi, Aldo Zargani, Maria Magnani Noya, Günter Grass, Hannah Arendt, Noam Chomsky, and Terracini himself (Marzano & Simoni 2010: 133).

In line with this, in 1969, Terracini publicly protested against the execution in Baghdad of fifteen people, including nine Jews, prosecuted as Israeli spies. During the XII PCI Congress in Bologna, Terracini accused the Soviet Union of distorting facts, and of having defined the Jews who had been hanged as «Zionist spies». The Jewish monthly «Shalom» praised the Communist leader for his political courage, and published his intervention in Bologna (Molinari 1995: 59). This episode gained traction in the Italian public opinion, to the point that an Italian Emergency Committee for the salvation of the Jews in the Middle East was formed. Terracini publicly joined this Committee without consulting the party, causing the irritation of the Political Bureau (Di Figlia 2012: 60, Toscano 2019).

In November 1969, the PCI took part to the Mediterranean conference organised in Palermo, where several delegations from Arab countries and Fatah met. The conference was organised by the Italian Committee of Solidarity for the Palestinian People, that at the times was at the forefront of the Communists' support for the revolutionary struggle of the Palestinians. To ensure the presence of the Fatah delegation, the Communists, together with the PSIUP (Italian Socialist Party for Proletarian Unity) insisted on excluding any Israeli presence. Terracini complained of this decision, disagreeing with the comparison that was made during the conference between the fight of Fatah against Israel, and that of the democratic opposition against the fascist regimes of Greece and Portugal. On that occasion, he declared:

> It is not acceptable. It is a meaningless comparison, because, on the one hand, there is the contrast between two nationalities that want to assert their rights, and on the other there is a clash between citizens of the same nationality, when what is at stake are civil liberties. (Molinari 1995: 35)

Zionism and Antisemitism

At the beginning of the 1970s, ever-widening sectors of Italian Judaism accused the PCI of antisemitism. While it can be argued that such an accusation had no specific basis, it is true that the PCI management was responsible for omissions and the recurrent use of ambiguous terminology, as it was clear in the debate to which Terracini himself took part in 1975. Interviewed by the director of «La Stampa» Carlo Casalegno, he stated that the communist press had favoured a certain confusion:

> Israel has attacked—Israel is the state of the Jews—and the Jews are the aggressors. So, the syllogism inevitably aroused that aversion against the Jews has always existed in the Italian masses. For the uneducated and the ill-intentioned, it was in fact very difficult to discern the boundaries between Israel's condemnation, the fight against Zionism, and the antisemitic campaign. And responsible men did not always do what was necessary to avoid and dissolve this confusion.[2]

Unlike the majority of his party, that considered Zionism a form of colonialism, for Terracini it was a positive aspiration to the land of Israel, a model of victorious socialism, which, with the birth of Israel, had exhausted its historical function. If delocalised, it risked to destabilise the condition of European Jews, but it still maintained a positive political element (Di Figlia 2012: 60). On 17 February 1971, while taking part to the television show «Boomerang», Terracini declared, in no uncertain terms, that the anti-Zionism pursued by the PCI was «an action that could only be condemned» (Riccardi 2006: 427–428). It was already anomalous that an important Communist leader, outside of any party mandate, would use non-communist means of communication to express arguments antithetical to the Party's official positions. When, in 1975, the UN General Assembly approved Resolution 3379, which defined Zionism as "a form of racism and racial discrimination, racist and imperialist ideology, a threat to international security and peace",[3] Terracini did not fail to issue a harsh statement: «The UN Resolution brings shame to the Assembly, and indelibly marks its proposers, those who supported it with their votes, and even those who abstained».[4] Worried that behind the condemnation of

[2] Casalegno, Carlo. 1975. Un verdetto antisemita. *La Stampa*. November 12.
[3] Ibidem.
[4] Ibid.

Zionism there might be hiding new forms of antisemitism, he again denounced anti-Jewish persecutions in the USSR, developing from the Sixties onwards a profound criticism of the living conditions of Soviet Jews.

> One cannot help feeling a strangeness in being faced today with the Jewish problem in the Soviet Union. It is anachronistic, where *chromos* is time, for a state and a socialist society. In addition, it is the time that follows the great massacre, the nefarious solution to the Jewish problem that was given by German Nazism. It is evident that the Soviet solution has nothing to do with that, but ultimately, to the extent that we can know it, it has the same purpose: to solve the problem by eliminating the factors, not by suppression, but by absorption and assimilation. The old antisemitism rejected the Jews and refused any contact with them. Today's aim is to absorb them, to integrate them. (Nicolo 2018: 130)

This came as a response to the Leningrad trail of June 1970, in which 11 people had been accused of attempting to hijack a plane. Those arrested, mostly Jews, belonged to a group of 37 people who had sent an open letter to the UN Secretary General to "protest against the anti-Zionist campaign, and asking for its direct intervention in order to be able to migrate to Israel". The defendants were subjected to a harsh trial that ended with two death sentences, and long prison convictions (Molinari 1995: 72). For Terracini, the Leningrad process had unfortunately represented a new, clamorous and deplorable episode of violation of socialist legality, clearly revealing the specificity of the Jewish problem.

The PCI had shared its concerns over the whole judicial process, even admitting the existence of some "issues" for the Jews who lived in the USSR, but on the pages of *L'Unità* an unspecified "anti-Soviet campaign orchestrated by Israel" (Di Figlia 2012: 78) was put forward. Terracini, in complete autonomy, decided to write in the weekly magazines *Vie Nuove* and *L'Espresso*, raising "the matter of respect of socialist legality" (Molinari 1995: 72). He clashed harshly with his party. The letter he sent to the editorial staff of *L'Unità* is from the end of 1973:

> Dear Unità, I cannot but be pleased with you for the severe judgment you made in yesterday's issue on the ignoble antisemitic article published by a Cairo newspaper, even if I do not share your attempt to place all the responsibility on the unfortunate journalist who signed it (in Egypt, it is known, the newspapers can only publish articles approved by the government), and to have its cause traced back to Tel Aviv. Indeed, to be honest, I fear very

> much that the condemnation of the antisemitic article was at least in part dictated by the need to mitigate the bad impression aroused in your readers by the publication on the previous day of a correspondence from Moscow, with the headline in four columns, showing the passages of certain letters written by some Soviet Jews who, moving to Israel, expressed their bitter disappointment about it. Now, it is understandable that articles in support of such a policy can be printed in the USSR. But it seems impossible to me that you believe you could convince your readers to support this thesis by giving them the testimony of 5 of the 30,000 Soviet Jews who, according to official data from Moscow, have, in the course of 1972 alone, moved to Israel. Yes, 5 out of 30,000! Now, it is quite true that the social sciences are today largely based on the so-called sample research. But nevertheless, the sample has to be serious, and not a joke like in this case. (Nicolo 2018: 143)

The letter was never published, but these statements and positions did not leave Moscow indifferent, and the USSR would soon begin to count the Italian senator among the "dangerous Zionists who entered the communist world" (Molinari 1995: 73). If it is true that with the passing of time Terracini's criticism of the Soviet Union became increasingly more radical and uncomfortable, it would be a stretch to come to the conclusion that at the end of the Seventies the senator had broken apart from Moscow. He himself declared that «Even when I disagreed with certain positions of the party, I always avoided being drawn to such steps that would lead me to detach from it definitively» (Pendinelli 1981: 154–155).

In 1974, he spoke in London at an international symposium called "The judicial situation of the Jews in the Soviet Union". Terracini concluded his London speech with a statement that Moscow would have called "anti-Soviet". In that occasion, he said:

> If I am totally sympathetic to the Soviet Jews, if I think it is simply my duty, as a man, to give Soviet Jews all the help they can get, I feel at the same time solidarity with the Soviet people for the total and general deprivation of rights that for us, people of the west, have become flesh of the flesh, heart of the heart of our existence.[5]

The reflection on the protection of the rights of Russian Jews took on primary importance for Terracini for over twenty years. Not only the

[5] Conferenza sull'antisemitismo, 1979. The typescript is the text of the correct speech and then sent in French to the conference organizers as also mentioned in Gianotti 2005: 275.

private correspondence of the Communist senator reveals his willingness to take a personal interest—even here—in the specific cases that were brought to his attention. His private archive also contains a large number of letters from Russian Jews who migrated to Israel thanking him for his help.

This is one of the most interesting features of Terracini. He followed the "Jewish question" with awareness and continuity, making it the object of public reflections and courageous actions. Without renouncing the other aspects of his political action, he transferred much of the experience and specific knowledge gained there to initiatives addressed to the Jewish world. Nor did he hesitate to assert his ideas even when the party was in open disagreement with him, avoiding dividing practices, and instead preferring to open his own network of relations towards the outside, in Italy and abroad. But above all, besides intervening in Parliament, in the press, and wherever he could, he never gave up getting personally involved on all the fronts where he felt committed, trying to be more effective and never losing a direct relationship with his interlocutors.

Conclusions

> I have always thought that the individual, no matter how strong his commitment and great his capacity to act, can not transform the world unless he works with others like him. […] That is why I have always wanted to belong to an organization in which my beliefs could turn into efficient action. […] That is the key to understand my choices. I never wanted to be a solitary thinker. (Pendinelli 1981: 140)

As we have shown, Terracini showed commitment and continuity of attention to the issues of the Jewish people, and in many occasions he maintained a certain autonomy vis-a-vis his party. These choices are not easy to interpret. Like he himself wrote, he was no "solitary thinker", but rather a leader to the party he had taken part in establishing. In the Seventies, he declared:

> It is too easy to be dissatisfied with, or against that socialism that has been implemented with disappointing results in so many countries. A new beginning could already be to say that it cannot be done like that […] The crisis of the contemporary world, the decline of so many hopes, and the arrival of so many unforseen problems can stimulate a new effort and a new

> imagination. The need to study, to better understand, and to choose the way to build forward faces today not the old guard (the old, like me, who are only good for regrets and memories), but the youth, who now can write the new pages of socialism. (ibidem)

A Communist leader that often operated on his own, Terracini is one of the protagonists of Italian history, of the PCI, of the fight against Fascism, and of the birth of the Constitution. He was also a force of divergence in a heated historical time, and a voice against the silence and oblivion that the Jewish people risked.

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"A Nostalgia for Totality": Cesare Cases Between Antisemitism, the Jewish Question and Israel

Simon Levis Sullam

An Autobiographical Triangle

Reminiscing about the post-war atmosphere, Cesare Cases—who was born in Milan in 1920 and died in Florence in 2005—wrote: "For those who felt uneasy and did not easily recover from the trauma [of anti-Jewish persecutions], the alternative was between left-wing parties and Zionism" (Cases 1985a: 21). This sort of autobiographical, ideal and partly ideological triangle—trauma, Zionism and left-wing parties—profoundly influenced Cases' life.

Cases always referred to the anti-Jewish persecution as the "trauma", a recurring spectre that had marked indelibly his existence. It was the tragedy that had befallen to the Jewish people and, on a personal level, the events that had forced him to flee from Italy and live in exile in Switzerland, where Cases trained initially as a chemist. There were also some positive aspects in those events, since they led him to begin his literary studies, to

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improve his German (which became essential in his career as a literary scholar) and to his encounter with Lucien Goldmann, the Romanian critic who introduced him to the works of Luckács. Luckács would become an essential theoretical reference for Cases as a militant critic and a historian of literature. In the immediate post-war period, Cases graduated in Italy in history of German literature with a dissertation on the controversial figure of Ernest Junger, under the supervision of philosophers Antonio Banfi and Enzo Paci (Cases 1997).[1]

Another important aspect of Cases' life, the second tip of his autobiographical triangle, was his political commitment. It began in the Communist Party between 1951 and 1959, until Cases moved to the area of the "new Left", and in particular in the social circles around the journal *Quaderni piacentini*, published between 1963 and 1984. Afterwards he became associated with the Communist daily newspaper *Il Manifesto*, occasionally contributing as an author. However, in the late 1970s, when he started teaching at the University of Turin, he also grew close to the political movement *Lotta Continua*. In the Seventies and Eighties, Cases also wrote for the weekly *L'Espresso*, and became the first director of literary monthly *L'Indice dei Libri del Mese*, founded in 1984. The third tip of the triangle was Israel and the Middle Eastern question, which captured Cases' conscience and political imagination first during the Six Days' War, and secondly, and especially, during the traumatic events of the war in Lebanon (1982–1985), and finally again during the first and the second Intifada. I will explore these three aspects—the memory of antisemitic persecutions, his political commitment and his attitude towards Israel—and more generally Cases' relation with his Jewish origins, mostly through two autobiographical documents. The first is the essay *Che ci fai in giro?* (What are you up to?), published in the journal *Il Ponte* in 1978, in a special issue commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the fascist "racial laws", and later included as the opening chapter of Cases' 1985 volume *Il testimone secondario, Saggi e interventi sulla cultura del Novecento* (The Secondary Witness. Essays and Interventions on Twentieth-Century Culture). The second is Cases' short autobiographical volume *Confessioni di un ottuagenario* (Confessions of an Eighty-year-old), published in 2000 (Cases 2003). I will show how Cases emerges as an interpreter, and typical representative of assimilated Italian Jews, and I will describe the ways in

[1] Forte, Luigi. 1997. E Cases abbracciò il fascista Junger, *Tuttolibri*, a supplement to *La Stampa*, July 24.

which he placed himself within the Left, especially in regards to Israel and Israeli politics. I will also show how his attitude towards Israel—and toward the Jewish question more broadly—shed light on his longing for Jewish freedom (or, better, freedom from Judaism) and, more generally, for human freedom.

Representing the Italian Jewish Experience

The first text, *Cosa fai in giro?*, is a small treasure of Italian Jewish memorial literature and, at the same time, a literary divertissement. It is also a sort of sociological treatise on Italian Judaism at the time of assimilation. In it, Cases, beginning from the start of Fascist anti-Jewish persecutions and continuing with the Second World War, proceeds backwards to reconstruct, through lively vignettes, the life of his family since the late nineteenth century and his own childhood under Fascism. Cases reflects on the condition of Italian Jews in different historical phases, and in the final pages he pauses on the contemporary dilemmas and contradictions of the Jewish relationship with Israel. Three books can be identified as models for Cases in writing this text. The first is *The Periodic Table* by Primo Levi, another chemist (like the young Cases) and Italian Jewish writer that greatly influenced Cases. Levi's book had appeared just a few years earlier, in 1975, with its first chapter "Argon" dedicated to a sociolinguistic reconstruction of Jewish life in Piedmont, an interest which resonates also in Cases' occasional references to Hebrew or Italian Jewish words. The second text is *Lessico famigliare* or *Family Sayings* (1963) by Natalia Ginzburg, Cases' close friend from the publishing house Einaudi, where he served as an advisor for German literature. The novel is the portrait of the Levis, a Jewish antifascist family living in Turin and coping with Fascism. Ginzburg is explicitly referred to in Cases' essay as the person who had revealed the "notorious secret" that "being Jewish meant simply a way of being bourgeois" (Cases 1985a: 436–437). Thus, in Cases' view, *Family Sayings* offered a kind of class-based reading of the Italian Jewish experience. More broadly, it inspired his representation of the highly integrated Italian Jewish world. A third source of inspiration was Giorgio Bassani's *The Garden of the Finzi Continis* (1962). The book told the story of a young Jewish man in Ferrara and his life in the period of the fascist persecutions culminating in the Holocaust, in relation to the Jewish high-bourgeois family of the Finzi Continis and their daughter Micol. The book is possibly evoked in Cases' childhood recollections on Jewish

holidays, when his grandfather and father put on him the "sacred robe, the *talith* […] which materialized the Jewish sense of uninterrupted tradition between generations" (Cases 1985a: 11). This is similar to Bassani's description of how the protagonist rediscovers his Jewish identity, and during service at the synagogue gazes from under the sacred robe at the young Micol Finzi Contini.

In *Che cosa fai in giro?* Cases examined antisemitism and identified in an ironic way its different typologies: "Jewish" antisemitism, implicitly intertwined with Jewish anti-Zionism; "company-based" one ("*l'antisemitismo aziendale*"), i.e. the anti-Jewish prejudice developing in working places; and the antisemitism of the small and medium bourgeoisie. Cases also considered racial antisemitism, which produced the fascist "racial laws", as well as one of its Italian predecessors, anti-Judaism, as defined by Catholic writer Giovanni Papini. This antisemitism was described by Cases as a "regional and earthy nationalism", produced by Tuscan so-called rural or "wild" ("*selvaggi*", in Italian) writers Giovanni Papini and Domenico Giuliotti, who in their *Dizionario dell'omo salvatico* (Dictionary of the Wild Man) of 1923 spoke of Jews as "the prototypes of eradicated, cosmopolitan men, devoted to the greedy Mammon". This was an ideology similar to the antisemitism of French nationalist novelist Charles Barrès: an ideology of "the land and the dead", and to Alphonse Toussenel's economic antisemitism, which mixed anti-Judaism and anti-capitalism in the book *Les Juifs rois de l'époque* (1847).

Antisemitism is thus represented by Cases as a pillar of (especially assimilated) Jewish identity, or better a negative force defining the community from the outside. Still, half way through his essay, Cases remarked: "Being antisemitic is easy, what about being Jewish?" Cases answered with the following: "In a situation of emancipation and social atomism, the rare resort to tradition was an effort imposed from the outside" (Cases was also thinking about the role of antisemitism in reinforcing Jewish identity)[2] "and it was subjectively not understandable". Here Cases was referring for instance to the "annual fast [on Yom Kippur], of which I was scarcely enthusiastic, because I did not understand why, since I had not sinned, I should bear the sins of the community". He also added: "To explain [Jewish belonging] you would have to historicize it and thus also dissolve it" (Cases 1985a: 13). The confrontation with religious identity becomes

[2] Forte, Luigi. 2000. La coscienza di Cesare, *Tuttolibri*, a supplement to *La Stampa*, March 18.

a factor leading towards its dissolution. In this exploration, Cases also turned to history: "From the time my grandfather had come from Mantua to Milan […], Jewish community belonging had become a faint memory of synagogues (also called "*scole*", i.e. "schools") from Mantua, which were already meaningless for my father". The history and memory of the Jewish community became the history of its decline.

Several of Cases' remarks concerning the Jewish experience were centred on the mythologised small town of Lambrugo, a holiday town in Brianza, near Como, where many Jewish families from Milan and other parts of Italy met (the place was also attended by, among others, the writer Carlo Emilio Gadda and his family). Here Jewish informal relationships developed, made up of widespread family relations and thick friendly ties, similar to those evoked in Natalia Ginzburg's *Family Sayings*. On this, Cases wrote: "In the end, the community revealed itself for what it was: a pure aggregate of families" (and, as Ginzburg used to say, "a way of being bourgeois"). Cases also noticed: "the milieu was formed from relatives and acquaintances, among which one developed most friendships". The mingling was intense, and people from different religious and ethnic backgrounds mixed more than one would have thought. "Since one was more or less Jewish if one was more or less bourgeois, there were Jews who were less Jewish than the Christians and, to the opposite, Christians who were more Jewish than Jews, or at least who aspired to become such" (Cases 1985a: 13). This description seems a Marxist version of the games played in Ginzburg's novel by the Levi family in Natalia Gizburg's novel, on "animals, vegetables and minerals". These categories, and their diverse combinations, were used by the family to divide the world: "Adriano was a mineral-vegetable. Paola an animal-vegetable. Gino a mineral-vegetable". But, Ginzburg concluded: "Regarding pure vegetables, imaginary pure, there were very few in the world" (Ginzburg 1999: 94). Jews were becoming Christians and vice-versa, mostly by assimilating a bourgeois identity, which also meant mixed heritages, and the loss of a specific identity. Through these descriptions, Cases became the typical representative of the highly integrated Italian Jew, manifesting only faint traces of his Jewishness, and living the life of the Italian bourgeois.

Only later would Cases, by then in his eighties, become more explicit about his relationship with Judaism—or lack thereof—even on theological grounds. In a page of his *Confessioni*, he actually declared himself "anchored to the semi-atheism of Italian idealism" (the tradition of the philosophical school of Benedetto Croce and Giovanni Gentile that

substituted religion with philosophy), with idealism clearly becoming for him a substitute faith to Judaism. Cases also recollected that his friend, writer and critic Franco Fortini (1917–1994), had once "bitterly reproached [him] because [he] had written […] that God 'notoriously' does not exist". Here atheism replaced Judaism (Cases 2003: 83). In the last pages of his *Confessioni*, Cases wrote: "I do not believe in the Sacred Scriptures, as I do not believe in the thousand precepts that were kept by [rabbi Elio] Toaff [the well known chief rabbi of Rome] and that made my late friend Primo Levi smile". Cases also added: "I feel Jewish because I do not believe that the Messiah has already arrived". But—he concluded—"as a good Jew", "I doubt he will arrive while I am still living" (Cases 2003: 158–159, Cases 1985a: 46). Messianism thus was mostly a wait, but it was reinterpreted in a sceptical perspective, and, as a consequence, almost dissolved.

Confronting Israel

The war in Lebanon in the early 1980s showed Cesare Cases' very critical attitude towards Israel and the Middle Eastern question. Already in *Che cosa fai in giro?*, Cases had criticised the "Promised Land" as "a miracle [of the Jews] at the expense of other peoples". To this, he juxtaposed "the [Jewish] hope for a true Promised Land where one could be gentle without being a victim, where there could be happiness without abuse, religiosity without God, business without the curse of work, materiality without money, and culture without its repressive role" (Cases 1985a: 22). Religiosity without God characterised Cases' attitude towards Judaism and his religious scepticism. At the same time, Cases recalled "the [Jewish] God, who is so mean, the God of the armies, who ordered the killing of all of Jericho's inhabitants just as it happened after the war [of 1948] with those of Deir Yassin"[3] God in the Middle East was a menacing figure, with partly stereotypical features, and the "mean God" of the Old Testament was a frequent trope in Catholic anti-Judaism.

This harsh criticism against Israel was not new for Cases, although during the Six Days' War he appeared—if we are to judge from his exchange of letters with his friend, philologist Sebastiano Timpanaro (1923–2000)—more strictly political, even ideological or (more precisely)

[3] Ivi. Deir Yassin is a village near Jerusalem where Jewish soldiers killed over one hundred Arabs in April 1948.

party-oriented. In his correspondence with Timpanaro during the 1967 war, Cases quoted a "pro-Israel" appeal by writer Italo Calvino, which he would not sign, and another political statement coming from the publishing house Einaudi, where it was drafted by historian Corrado Vivanti and Slavic studies expert Vittorio Strada. This was "more critical of Israel […], and I thought it was a good one", Cesare wrote. However, Cases concluded, "in the current situation I do not think it makes much sense to write a statement showing a different attitude from the Communist Party". The difference between Cases and his comrades on the left of the PCI—the party was at the time against Israel, in line with the USSR—was not in the firm criticism of Israel, but in the attack on Nasser, seen as anti-imperialist but "bourgeois", and someone who had gained the backing of the Arab masses, while being in the end responsible for the Arab defeat. Cases and his comrades also attacked the USSR, seen as responsible of an "imperialism that aimed to gain better access to oil reserves" (Cases Timpanaro 2005: 118–119). While the majority of left-wing Italian Jews supported Israel (Molinari 1995, Di Figlia 2012), Cases mostly followed the line of the Communist party, but distanced himself from it in criticising the USSR as imperialist. Later, in his *Confessions*, Cases said that in 1967 he had, in the end, actually "abstain[ed himself] […] from criticizing the Israelis": contrary to his friend Franco Fortini, who had published the fierce anti-Israeli pamphlet *I cani del Sinai* (Sinai's Dogs) (Cases 2003: 138, Fortini 2002, Tarquini 2019: 186–1931).

Years later, in the midst of the war in Lebanon, after the September 1982 massacre of Sabra and Chatila, Cases spoke up via a harsh article published on the front page of *Il Manifesto*, that carried the sombre title *Massacro e olocausto* (Massacre and holocaust) (Cases 1985a: 409–411). Here he wrote solemnly: "The recent events in Lebanon mark a divorce between the state of Israel and a large part, perhaps most, of the Jewish Diaspora, that had so far shown solidarity while being only partly critical of specific aspects [of Israel]". This meant "the end of Zionism as an attempt at building not so much a state, but a 'Jewish national home'". Cases spoke about the dissolution of the relationship between Israel and the Diaspora, which was a major turning point in the formation modern of a Jewish identity, while also denouncing the decline of Zionism. Concerning Zionism, he evoked, in nostalgic terms, the "strong component of social and political emancipation", especially of the socialist Bundist stream, born in Eastern Europe, which wanted to create "autonomous Jewish communities based on collective work", and that looked for

a synthesis between "Jewish historical particularism" and "general human emancipation". Wondering what was left of this dream, Cases also bitterly reflected on the mistaken premises of the Zionist utopia, which was based on the wrong presumption of the "non-existence of Arabs" in Palestine.

Cases was especially critical of the justification—or true moral blackmail—that used the "Nazi massacre" (as he preferred to call it, criticising the use of the term "holocaust", which was consolidating in that period, and that related to the idea of sacrifice) as an excuse for Israeli violence. Such argument was being especially weaponised by Menachem Begin's right-wing party, at the time in power in Israel. Cases admonished: "The dead are useless, or their only purpose is to avoid other deaths". He hoped that young Israelis would "transform Israel into a country free from Zionist ideology and from enslavement to America, and entertain sincere dialectical relations with Arab countries". The anti-Zionist Cases went hand in hand with the anti-American.

Still, in his *Confessions*, Cases also recalled the aspiration to normality that Israel represented for Jews in the post-war period. After "long centuries of oppression", "they wanted to be like everybody else, and this was possible only in Israel". "I can still recall", Cases added, "the enthusiastic gaze of a young Zionist telling me about the presence of thieves and prostitutes in the promised land" (Cases 2003: 45). The Zionist utopia was intertwined with a search for normality.

Cases soon realised that during the war in Lebanon, it was not easy to simply proclaim the end of the Zionist dream, or the final fracture between Israel and the Diaspora, because an anti-Jewish discourse, intertwined with anti-Zionism and with the legitimate criticism of Israel, was rapidly spreading in the Italian media. The media amplified the drives of an Italian society in which the post-Second-world-war taboo of antisemitism had fallen. Therefore, Cases denounced in the national daily *la Repubblica* the "great antisemitic potential" of the political attacks on Israel during the invasion of Lebanon, especially when there was no clear distinction between Israel and the Jews (Tarquini 2019: 256–262). Cases also underlined the consequences of the decline of the "almost mandatory compassion" toward the victims of the Shoah (Marzano Schwarz 2013: 170).[4] In particular after the terrorist attack against the Rome synagogue in October 1982, Cases noticed a rise of antisemitism and declared that antisemitism was at the origin "if not of the misdeed [of the terrorist attack in Rome],

[4] Cases, Cesare. 1982. Ma gli ebrei non hanno un Papa. *La Repubblica*. July 17.

at least of the silent consent [its authors were] looking for" (Cases Timpanaro 2005: 308, 311–314).[5]

The critique against Israel, and a general preoccupation with the Middle Eastern question would not decline in the following years, although Cases appeared less on the forefront of these debates. However, in 2002 he was among the signatories of an appeal critical of Israel and in favour of a dialogue with the Palestinians in the course of the second Intifada.[6]

A Nostalgia for Totality

Much else could be said about Cases' relationship to the Jewish question beyond his critical attitude towards Israel, especially by looking at the ways in which he dealt with Gyorgy Luckács (Cases 1985b), Karl Kraus and Walter Benjamin (Cases 1985a), all assimilated Jewish intellectuals who represented constant influences on Cases' work as a literary historian and critic. However in his writings there is hardly a mention of the Jewish background of such figures, as they are mostly seen as "non-Jewish Jews", to borrow an expression coined by Isaac Deutscher (Deutscher 1969) and used also by Cases. It would also be worth exploring Cases' engagement with Primo Levi, which started early on with the critic's subtle investigations of *If this is a man* (this was one of Cases' first published writings), and ended in later years with his notes dating to the time of Levi's death (Cases 1987: 187, Levi 1997: 5–33).

A further aspect implied in Cases' reflections on the Jewish question derived from what he wrote about the indirect consequences of the anti-Jewish persecutions that he experienced. Among these personal consequences Cases underlined his constant critical and theoretical search for an all-encompassing philosophy. In fact, he came to see this search for "totality" (a category which he drew from Luckács), as a consequence of the persecutions and of his own exile. Both these connected events (persecution and exile) determined a "*fragmented life* which is perhaps the factor generat[ing his] nostalgia for totality" (Cases 1985a: 34). Such experiences—persecution, eradication and the search for totality—turned for Cases into a tension, which he constantly experienced, between "rationalism", a "part of [his] enlightened, ironic character", and "irrationalism",

[5] Cases, Cesare. 1982. Il loro razzismo e la nostra paura. *Il Manifesto*, October 10.

[6] 2001. Appello N.I.M.N. (= "Non in mio nome"). *Il Manifesto*. May 11 and 23. http://leonardodaga.insyde.it/Shevek/AppelloNIMN.htm. Accessed 9 January 2018.

which led him to "drink with full sips hopes and utopias", while he found himself "unsettled in a world off the hinges" (Cases 1985a: 36), particularly during his exile in Switzerland. Another dichotomy that Cases experienced was that of a strong and profound conflict between particularism and universalism (Cases 2003: 143), which characterised Cases' ambivalent relation with his own Jewish identity and—most acutely—with the politics and fate of Israel.

Cesare Cases would try to resolve these tensions, conflicts and confrontations through a complete emancipation from Judaism and from Israel. But there was also a broader and higher aspiration toward a complete liberation of man, an aspiration that brought him back to utopianism—or the "nostalgia for totality"—and thus back again to his unresolved dichotomies.

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PART III

The Israel Question

Introduction

In this third part of the volume the aim of the authors is to understand if and how the Arab-Israeli conflicts have influenced the relations between the European Left and Jewish people, rather than to restate or reformulate the history of the wars between Israel and the Arab world, or the conflict with the Palestinians. It is well known, in fact, that following the Six-Day War of 1967, the relationship between the Left and the Jews underwent a transformation, and that since then reflections on anti-Zionism have provoked a debate on the definition and the forms of antisemitism.

In reality, as previously discussed, this relation was already complex in the first half of the twentieth century, long before the birth of Israel, and claiming that it was in 1967 that it turned problematic is not correct. Besides, as the papers will show, in this regard, significant differences exist between the socialist and social-democratic Left on the one hand, and the communists on the other, especially from the beginning of the Second World War and after the foundation of Israel. For example, if it is true that in 1948 the European communists welcomed the birth of Israel, it also true that they maintained an ambiguous position, as Andrea Guiso shows in his paper. He argues that the PCI's anti-Zionism had been developed in the context of the international Bolshevism of the Twenties and Thirties and transformed into operational codes and ideological regulation by Stalin during his undisputed dictatorship over the international Communist movement. Thus, in 1948, the Italian Communists welcomed the Jewish State but, at the same time, their support was tricky. It was an inherent and

functional expression of anti-imperialism, which constituted the backbone of the USSR's foreign policy. As a matter of fact, the closeness of the PCI to Israel waned already at the start of the Fifties, when the Italian Communists aligned themselves with the USSR, which after having recognised the Jewish State, quickly distanced itself from it.

In this sense, the Six-Day War of 1967, occurring almost twenty years later, was not a watershed moment. Rather, at this time, a large part of international public opinion began to detach from Israel, seen now as an aggressive power in the heart of the Middle East. The Seventies were probably the lowest point in Left-Jewish relations in terms of international politics. In Italy in those years, like Claudio Brillanti shows, the communist and the socialist world split. After having first criticised Israel's "role" and then its "nature", the Communists embraced another national cause, the Palestinian, underlining its anti-imperialist character and perceiving the purpose of destroying the "Zionist presence"—enunciated in the 1969 PLO Charter—as the internationalist solution that would have allowed the cohabitation of Arabs and Jews within a democratic and secular State. As for the PSI, the internal debate allowed a less partial approach to the Middle East's problems. Some of them seemed to grasp the complexity of the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian conflict, when they underlined that it had "anomalous characteristics compared to 'traditional' conflicts", because along with the dispute between sovereign countries there was a new element represented by the Palestinians.

This analysis resonates with Thomas Maineaut's and Gregorio Sorgonà's essays on the radical Left, which had a significant relevance in both French and Italian political debates in the Sixties and the Seventies. Thomas Maineult analyses the anti-Zionist activism of the French radical Left, showing that Trotskyist and Maoist movements played an important role on the redefinition of the figure of the Jews on the Left in France. These groups took the side of the Palestinians, portraying them as martyrs of the Jews and supporting anti-Zionist actions, and depicting and perceiving Zionism as a new form of colonialism. The condemnation of the Israeli government and of the existence of the State of Israel itself ensued, becoming a common ground for the different political movements that emerged on the far Left at the end of the Sixties. Gregorio Sorgonà's analysis of the Italian radical Left in the Seventies is in line with this. In his essay, he maintains that the main groups rarely looked diachronically at the growth of Israel's nationalist right after 1967, because they considered Zionism the driving ideology of all Israeli political parties. In the left-wing press it is

possible to see an evident tendency towards ideological reductionism according to which Zionism was displayed as a homogenous political phenomenon, when in reality it had many different internal currents that were sometimes even incompatible. The equivalence between Zionism and colonialism was founded on a reconstruction of Israel's history based on plenty of omissions, like the existence of Jewish settlements in Palestine before the twentieth century, or of those established after 1905. It is worth noticing that the Italian radical Left never mentioned the aversion of the Arab nations towards the UN Resolution 181/1947. Even when talking about ethnic discrimination, the picture painted is only partial. While the newspapers stressed Israel's guilt, and racism against the Jews in the USSR, they do not mention the discrimination that the Jewish community had to endure in the Arab countries after 1948. This is surprising, if we consider that in both Egypt and Iraq the Jews targeted were in many cases communists. These omissions, Sorgonà maintains, might be due simply to a lack of awareness of the facts.

The succeeding contributions confirm the existence of a problem. Next to a mainstream Left that, especially from the start of the Seventies, considered the Palestinians the protagonists of the revolutionary struggle and Israel a symbol of imperialism, there have also been intellectuals and politicians with a different vision of the Jewish question, of the persecutions, and of Zionism.

Micha Brumlik, as Anna Corsten shows in this volume, is one of the most intresting member of his generation. Born in 1947, he represents a part of these German-Jewish leftist intellectuals who are observers and critics of antisemitism in the New Left. He participated in the student movement and was one of the founders of the left-wing *Jüdische Gruppe* in Frankfurt. As Corsten writes, reconstructing Brumlik's critique of antisemitism in several left-wing groups sheds light on problems the New Left has had in articulating its critique of Israel: "In addition, their disapproval was often voiced in connection with comparisons to the *Shoah*, which is particularly problematic given German history".

In fact, in contesting Israel, the Left has often used the history of anti-Jewish persecutions as a comparison. In the Eighties, and especially during the Lebanese Civil War and at the time of the Sabra and Chatila massacre, criticism of Israel turned into antisemitism. This was no novelty. Comparing Israel and the Nazis, as well as using references to the cruel God of Israel, and the overlapping of the terms *Israeli*, *Jew* and *Zionist* that had appeared already in the Fifties and had become popular during the Six-Day War,

exploded dramatically during the Lebanese 1982 war, growing over the following decade. Still in the Nineties, indeed, a political force like the Spanish Communist Party, had equivocal positions on the matter, as highlighted in Manuelle Peloilles's essay. She analyses the image of the conflict between Israel and Palestine in the organs of the PCE *Mundo Obrero*, and *Nuestra Bandera* from the Gulf War to the present day, stressing ambiguities and showing that the boundary between anti-Zionism and antisemitism has been thin and permeable. In *Mundo Obrero*, for example, the identification between Israel and the Nazis intensified over time, first in 1990, and then after September 11, 2001, during the Iraqi War.

All of this does not mean that the Left is antisemitic, but that the intolerance towards Jewish minorities and their history, but also towards the State that represent them, is not absent from its cultural horizon. Sometimes antisemitic, most of the time indifferent to the Jews, the Left has looked at them but not seen them.

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The Italian Communist Party and the "Israel Question" During the First Years of the Cold War. Towards a Historical Semantics of Communist Anti-Zionism

Andrea Guiso

A Historical and Methodological Introduction

Reflecting on the relationship between Jews and the Left during her time, French scholar of communism Annie Kriegel emphasized the need to discern two fundamental issues: the Jewish question on the Left and the position of Jewish people within the Left (Kriegel 1984). We can apply this perspective also to the communist *milieu*, noting, however, the persistence within that world of an organizational model based on the iron moral discipline of its followers, on the individual internalization of the party's primacy, and on its indissoluble political and ideological unity.

The fundamental elements of this model, shaped through the cycle of "war-revolution" triggered by the First World War, are well known: the

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international civil war as a permanent political reality; the priority of foreign policy over the national; the friend-enemy binary as a meter for political relations; the ultra-elitist conception of the relationship between the party and the masses; the bureaucratic-authoritarian conception of the organization; the unconditional loyalty to the Leader-State of the global revolution; and the alleged superiority of the Bolshevik revolutionary model over any other political and organizational form (Pons and Smith 2017).

This essay aims to analyze the stance of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) towards the so-called Jewish question, as an expression of the politics of the international communist movements in the early years of the Cold World. Tending to this background is essential to capture both the persistence of deep-rooted and long-lasting mechanisms of representation in communist portrayals of Jewish nationalism, as well as the complexity of the relationship between communism and Judaism. this was influenced by a multiplicity of factors, like individual inclinations, family and friendship networks, community bonds based on faith, long-established institutions, ancient customs, symbolism, and rituals.

Any reflection on this particular subject must begin with a preliminary question: what significance did Italian historiography grant to the relationship between the Italian Communist Party and the Jewish question during the Cold War? As it is well known, the fate of the Jewish minority in Italy has long occupied a foremost position in the study of discursive strategies of citizenship, and of the processes of national identity formation in a state with a recent and problematic constitution. Contextualizing the history of Jewish people within the social, political, and cultural background of the unified State is a cornerstone of scholarship that investigates the relations between national identity and religious identity, between the experience of modernity and the persistent references to tradition, and between a politics of recognition and dynamics of exclusion.

In the face of this growing interest in the social and political history of Italian Jews, little to no attention has been paid to the relations between the Jewish minority and the world, ideals, and political organization of the Marxist Left, and in particular of Italian communism. While a small reversal of this trend in recent years must be noted, (Riccardi 2006; Santese 2007; Toscano 2007; Di Figlia 2012; Brillanti 2013; Id 2017; Id 2018;

Tarquini 2017; Ead 2019a, 2019b, 2019c) research on the topic has been generally characterized by a lack of coherence on a methodological and theoretical level. Indeed, recent studies on these questions seem to reflect a tendency towards rigid analytical compartmentalization, poorly suited to understand comprehensively the topic. This problem emerges in analyses of the relations between the PCI and Israel conducted with a traditional historical-diplomatic approach, inattentive to the weight exerted by ideologies and doctrines on international politics.[1]

The same applies to studies of cultural and social history that are not very inclined to evaluate the significance of international conditioning on the politics of communist parties, especially when it comes to the issue of Jewish national identity.[2] These approaches fail to grapple with the theme of anti-Zionism in communist circles (an important and innovative contribution, in this area, comes from a recent work of Alessandra Tarquini: see Tarquini 2019c), a theme that was present in the PCI well before the end of its post-war pro-Israel phase, and that cannot be considered as the late product of a pro-Arab stance adopted in line to international criticism of Israel after the Six-Day War (Baldacci 2014; Rubbi 1996. For a different interpretation see Tarquini 2019c).

Such a weak or a-problematic interpretation of communist anti-Zionism has produced a twofold, correlated effect. On the one hand, it has presented this attitude as an expression of an instrumental and insincere hostility towards the project of a Jewish national state, imposed by Cold War logics of alignment and by the imperious ties of loyalty to the Soviet Union; on the other hand, it has eschewed the complex question of the dangerous relations between anti-Zionism and anti-Judaism, which manifested against the backdrop of the "Israel question" in early Cold-War Italy.

[1] It's significant that Luca Riccardi's book almost entirely ignores the Stalinist gestation phase of the PCI's anti-Zionism, as well as the national implications of the Soviet State's antisemitism.

[2] In Matteo Di Figlia's book, the story of the relationship between the Left and Jews unfolds mainly in a local and family context. The study fails to provide a real in-depth analysis of the external ideological conditionings and the impact of the Cold War on the relationship between Jewish identity and political identity.

Anti-Imperialism as the Guiding Principle in the Communist Analysis of the Jewish National Discourse

Looking at the relationship between the PCI and the Jewish question in the early years of the Cold War can offer a privileged perspective to untangle the issues above. The PCI's political directive—the "struggle for peace"—in the early stages of the war (until, roughly, the campaign against the European Defense Community in 1954), helps to elucidate the long-term theoretical, political-organizational, and discursive framework within which the attitude of the communists towards the Jewish national discourse gradually evolved.

The struggle for peace, which merged with the politics of organized anti-Americanism after the birth of the Atlantic Pact, was not an unexpected occurrence in the history of international communism. Rather, it constituted a peculiar model of *political mobilization*, the legacy of a historical cycle (the cycle of *total war-revolution*) that at the time Bolshevik leaders did not consider exhausted. The ideological breeding ground of this veritable *Achsenzeit* gave way to the mentality, organization, and ethics of international communism. The beating heart and core identity of this new, totalizing organizational model were an imperialist doctrine and the dogma of inevitable war, which postulated an irreducible opposition between the communist system and an external world perceived—through the psychological legacy of *war communism*—as an undifferentiated and hostile reality (On the role of anti-imperialism ad the Comintern's ideological and cultural glue, see Mitter 1996. See also McDermott and Agnew 1996; Pons 2012).

This "classist" reading of inter-state relations guided the propaganda effort of the international communist movement, linking it to the defense of the Soviet State's interests in an international system perceived as precarious and hostile. This was a system that the Stalinist elites soon learned to manipulate according to the most traditional dictates of political realism. Revolutionary Messianism and *Realpolitik*, Thomas More, and Machiavelli helped to forge an anti-imperialist ethic destined, for a long time, to be the ideological glue holding the "international communist system" in place amidst the dichotomous and fissionable world of international relations (Aga Rossi and Zaslavsky 1997; Guiso 2007; Pons 1999).

Given the above, a reading of communist anti-Zionism as the ideological outcome of the Cold War makes little sense and could be misleading. The period after the Second World War and the Cold War does not mark an unprecedented phase of the Jewish and Israel questions in international communism, which became clearer through the distinctly pro-Western and pro-American attitude of the new State of Israel. The logic that governs the classist view of international relations in the international communist movement does not in fact contemplate the idea of the nation as an original and autonomous entity. Within the logic of international Bolshevism, democratic nations are those that, by renouncing any autonomous and original claim to sovereignty, accept to become *ipso facto* an integral part of the socialist bloc (On 4 July 1946, the Jewish communist intellectual Emilio Sereni wrote to Raffaele Cantoni: "At this time, as often happened in history, the cause of Judaism is bond, more than ever, with the worldwide cause of defending democracy and peace". See Sereni 2011). Bourgeois and reactionary nations are those who eschew this logic. The correspondence between Emilio Sereni and his brother Enzo, an ardent Zionist who died in Dachau, is from this point of view a document of monumental importance. In a letter dated November 4, 1936, Mimmo (as Emilio Sereni secretly signed his letters) distances himself from the ideas of socialist and utopian Zionism (professed by his brother) through a staunch and unwavering Stalinist logic:

> A politician of the proletariat … is valuable and represents something, only insofar as he is bound to his class and expresses its needs and aspirations. Today, there is no possibility of becoming an interpreter and spokesperson of the interests of the proletariat outside of the party of the proletariat. There is a logic of counter-revolution, as there is a logic of revolution (Sereni and Sereni 2000: 141).

Therefore, the USSR's tactical and revocable support for the Jewish national cause is a constitutive component of the anti-imperialist culture of the international communist movement, and it is used to reinforce the identity of the communist system within the "international civil war" begun in October 1917. Thus, the arguments in favor of Zionism must be understood in a dimension of "logical extraneousness", similar to that found, in the words of Emilio Sereni to his brother Enzo in April 1937, when "reading the sincerest writings of a young Italian fascist":

> Even more so, I got this impression when reading your article in memory of Beilinson. Your argument gave me the impression of a "*credo quia absurdum.*" There is in it an external sharpness, a semblance of political realism […], but it feels like one of those extremely rigorous, formally logical, and consequential arguments that a madman can develop with great lucidity. You know that not only *absit injuria verbis*, but that I found this out with great pain. All the greater because your logic … seems to me a logic of despair …. It is not, naturally, a different logic that prevents us from understanding each other, but rather our different and opposite class positions. You develop the logic of class collaboration, of the subordination of the interests of the Palestinian proletariat to those of the Jewish bourgeoisie, of the "voluntary limitation" of the proletariat and of its struggle, of the lowering of the proletariat's standard of living. It is a logic that I know well, that the social patriots developed during the war, and that fascisms have excelled in (Sereni and Sereni 2000: 149).

Of course, even the politics of anti-imperialism, as well as the American doctrine of containment (which would mirror anti-imperialism in the years of the Cold War), underwent various phases. Stalin's politics, evidently, was not destined to coincide with that of Khrushchev. However, until the détente, this politics was never seriously questioned (although today we know that even the détente was not a true overcoming of the premises of such politics). The questions presented to the Senate by Umberto Terracini on May 25, 1948—in which the leader of the PCI urged the government to recognize the State of Israel[3]—must be adequately contextualized within a political culture built on the clear distinction between intermediate phases and historical objectives, where the first was at the service of the latter. This first conclusion is followed by a second concerning periodization. The year 1956 (as well as 1967) must, I believe, be seen as evidence of the PCI's anti-Zionist orientation, compounded by the role that the PCI aimed to assume over time as a *shadow government* of Italian foreign policy and, therefore, of the increasingly pro-Arab Middle Eastern politics adopted by official diplomacy and by governments of the Christian Democracy (an aspect on which Luca Riccardi's book sheds light).

[3] Interrogazione di Terracini al governo per il riconoscimento dello Stato di Israele. 1948. *L'Unità,* May 26

The Anti-Zionism of the Italian Communist Party: A Historical Semantics

Given the above, the anti-Zionist element of the Jewish question, as advanced by Italian communists, reveals specific connotations vis-à-vis the socialist tradition or rising indifference towards antisemitism in Marxist-inspired philosophy (Traverso 1999; Id. 1997). This allows to better understand the nature of the PCI's sudden reversal, in 1948, on the question of the Jewish national state and its right to exist as a sovereign equal entity. This turnabout was linked to the failure of Moscow's foreign policy to use Israel to insert itself in the Middle Eastern geopolitical context to fight British interests. It also makes it possible to understand the nature of the involvement—albeit indirect—of Togliatti's party in Soviet state antisemitism, rekindled with unprecedented violence during the last phase of Stalinism (1952–1953) (The expression "state antisemitism" comes from Rucker 2001. Rapoport 1990; Klier and Lambroza, 1992. On the question of antisemitism in Europe's Left, see, in particular Crapez 2002; Wistrich 1990).

Here, too, anti-imperialism reduces social complexity and functions as a normative code within the international communist system, in the service of discipline and internal control. The attack on the United States as epigones of the racist politics of Hitler's Germany, and the party press' cover-up of the anti-Jewish politics of Eastern communist regimes engaged in a vast purge of their leading apparatuses, go far beyond mere propaganda in defense of the image of the Soviet Union as a peaceful, tolerant, and democratic power. Such acts contributed to the circulation of images and symbolic references traceable to modern anti-Judaism.

Given its geopolitical positioning, it was easier for the PCI, and for the French Communist Party, to avoid any compromising involvement in openly antisemitic policies and purges. The "magnacucchi"[4] (just like Tillon and Marty in France) (Courtois 1983) took on the task of clamping down on cadres and executives, offering a convenient scapegoat to the internal enemy syndrome instigated by the Soviets amidst the serious international tensions of 1949–1953. The operations of Western communists continued to take the shape of propagandistic support for the USSR as an unparalleled benevolent power against the Jews, in a repeated exalta-

[4] Magnani and Cucchi were two local leaders of the PCI accused in 1951 of working for Tito's Yugoslavia.

tion of the Soviet State's merits towards the "true" Jewish people. This definition is ascribable to the dichotomous Marxist-Leninist division of any social phenomenon in two antagonistic universes, which in this case are conspiratorial and reactionary Zionism, subservient to American imperialist interests and used to practice a "racist policy" against Arabs, and a view of the Jewish "people" through a revolutionary lens in the universalistic framework of the class struggle led by the USSR.[5]

The narratives employed by the communist press, therefore, had to perform two closely related functions. First, they had to present the Soviet Union as a custodian of national, ethnic, and religious minorities, through articles that verged on a veritable exaltation of communist merits in protecting religious minorities and Jewish cultures.[6] Second, they had to redirect towards the political enemy all the accusations made by the "bourgeois" and pro-government newspapers against the Soviet Union and its "fifth columns."[7] This resulted in the incessant campaigns to associate the United States with the policies of Zionism—"born as a reactionary nationalist movement of the Jewish bourgeoisie"[8]—and antisemitism. These were two opposite manifestations of "racial ideology", according to the "ideological consultations" sent by the *Quaderno dell'Attivista* to cadres and grass-roots militants.[9]

The campaign against the European Defense Community allowed Cominform's propaganda experts to associate, with a certain insistence and evocative force, Germany's rearmament to the policies of subjugation of European nations to American imperialism, with explicit references to the resurgence of Hitlerian racial politics on a global scale. To foment this association of ideas, these groups evoked improvable links between

[5] De Rosa, Gabriele. 1949. Politica estera. Il riconoscimento di Israele. *L'Unità,* January 28; Ferrara, Maurizio. 1951. Il Medio Oriente in rivolta contro l'imperialismo. *Rinascita,* October 10.

[6] See for example the article Intensa fioritura della cultura yiddish nel Birobigian. 1953. *L'Unità,* January 1. See also Gli ebrei nell'URSS. 1951. *Rassegna Sovietica*, August-September.

[7] Pastore, Ottavio. 1952. Traditori senza razza. *L'Unità*, November 26.

[8] *Quaderno dell'attivista*. 1953 february 1. See also: Sciovinismo e americanismo sono i due pericoli di Israele. 1950. *L'Unità,* May 13.

[9] *Quaderno dell'attivista*. It is extremely important to emphasize the agreement between the Stalinist Left of the PCI and the Italian Socialist Party during the early years of the Cold War on the issue of Israeli nationalism and Zionism as expressions of the "reactionary" and "class" politics of the Jewish "bourgeoisie." (Tarquini 2019c).

American and Nazi criminals, and played on the analogy between the Atlantic Pact, the European Army, and the Pact of Steel.[10]

The mobilization in defense of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg—accused of espionage against the United States—served instead to counterbalance the effects of the press campaigns against the state-based antisemitism of Eastern countries.[11] To these, the PCI responded with an incessant press campaign that sought to conceal the anti-Jewish character of the purges occurring in the Eastern bloc, and to present the trials against Rajk, Slánský, and other communist leaders of Jewish origin as actions of revolutionary vigilance, aimed at eradicating the cancer of the counter-revolution.[12]

According to the PCI's press, the trials against leaders of the Communist Parties of Eastern Europe had nothing to do with forms of hostility or prejudice against Jewish people. Interestingly enough, the press omitted that these trials were held exclusively against Jews. The origin of the accused was often veiled by ambiguous formulations that recalled the stereotype of economic anti-Judaism ("merchants" was the term with which the *Unità* used to refer to the accused in the Balint and Keynesies trial in Hungary).[13] References and associations were also spread through comic strips. For instance, through the "creditors" of the *Milionario che rubò il sole* [The Millionaire Who Stole the Sun], a story full of explicit antisemitic symbolism, published in the children's magazine *Il Pioniere*, which was ran for a time by famous writer of fairy tales and children's stories Gianni Rodari.[14] The same charges of "cosmopolitanism", directed at the groups accused of plotting against the democracies of the East, called to mind the old clichés of the Jew without a homeland, holder of a ubiquitous and stateless financial power.[15]

[10] Dulles aiutò Hitler. 1953. *L'Unità*, January 31.

[11] L'affare Rosenberg. 1952. *L'Unità*, November 22. Slansky e Rosenberg. 1952. *L'Unità*, November 28.

[12] Le organizzazioni sionistiche al servizio degli Stati Uniti. 1953. *L'Unità*, January 23. I dirigenti del sionismo contro i lavoratori ebrei. 1953. *L'Unità*, January 27.

[13] Terroristi jugoslavi condannati in Ungheria. 1952. *L'Unità*, November 15.

[14] Il milionario che rubò il sole. 1951. *Il Pioniere*, April 14: 7.

[15] The stereotype of the Jewish high finance conspiracy, based on a reactionary class politics, is argued with extreme lucidity in the "ideological consultations" of the *Quaderno dell'attivista*. 1953, February 1.

The "doctors' plot", publicized in January 1953, finally reinforced the conceptual link between Zionism and Americanism, already extensively illustrated on the *Unità* in Jacoviello's long news reports from Palestine.[16] The "plot" resorted to another great *topos* of anti-Judaism, that of ritual murder and of the Jewish "poisoner."[17]

Thus, it would not be inappropriate, on the basis of these elements, to speak of an *asymptomatic antisemitism* in the PCI of the early years of the Cold War, constructed as a feeling of hostility based on indirect symbolic correlations, and on widespread and unconscious prejudices. With reference to Italian communists, Paolo Spriano wondered if it would not have been appropriate in those years:

> to look with a more careful eye at the alleged betrayal of men like Slánský or Rajk, condemned in monstrous trials, or the "conspiracy" of the Kremlin doctors, also accused by the *Unità* not only of being "poisoners in white coats, but of being so *qua* Zionists, that is to say Jews" (Spriano 1986: 116)[18]

"A Class Struggle Fought Within Ourselves"

The struggle for peace and organized anti-Americanism were marked, like other aspects of Cold War communist politics, by a profound ambivalence. The peace committees of the early Fifties worked to co-opt and mobilize supporters and representatives of Israeli communities, in order to broaden the field of alliances and overcome the rigid conflicts of the

[16] Jacoviello, Alberto. 1950. Grandi speranze in viaggio. *L'Unità,* May 4: 3. Id. 1950. Lettera dalla Palestina. *L'Unità*, May 7: 3. Id. 1950. Lettera da Tel Aviv. *L'Unità*, May 16: 3. Id. Nazareth in Galilea fortezza rossa di Israele. *L'Unità*, May 14: 3. Id. 1950. Gerusalemme divisa fra due fazioni antagoniste. *L'Unità*, May 18: 3. Id. 1950. Lo Stato di Israele vuole "creare gli ebrei". *L'Unità*, May 13: 3.

[17] Scoperta in Unione Sovietica una banda di medici assassini. 1953. *L'Unità*, January 14. Berlinguer, Giovanni. 1953. Infami delitti compiuti sotto la maschera della scienza. *L'Unità,* January 20.

[18] One can surmise Palmiro Togliatti's answer to these subtleties by reading between the lines of a letter that the secretary of the PCI sent to Ada Alessandrini on 9 February 1949, in response to a specific request for the PCI to intervene in defense of the Catholic Cardinal Mindszenty, accused by the Hungarian communist regime of crimes against the State. The legal and politically opportunistic arguments to deny this request were encapsulated in this dry conclusion: "… if there are Catholics who do not understand the reason for this sentence, it means that they are not good democrats, or not good enough to understand that at some point the enemies of democracy can no longer be left free." (Togliatti 2014: 131).

Cold War.[19] The strategy of the mass party—interchangeable with that of the civil war party ready to mobilize in the event of a new international conflict—did not spare any resources in terms of alliances and supporters of the anti-imperialist cause.

Unexplored avenues of research open here. Why did these communities join? What was their purpose?[20] What kind of bond did they create with the Italian Communist Party? Where was this phenomenon more significant? These queries take us back to the methodological question introduced at the beginning of this paper, and lead to the conclusion that it would be limiting to link the relationship between communism and the Jewish question only to the ideological nature of the link between militant and party, and between national communism and the Leader-State of the global revolution. In terms of individual experience, the discussion becomes extremely interesting.

The political parables of Umberto Terracini and Emilio Sereni—seen in the light of the Six-Day War—and the memoirs of some intellectuals and leaders, provide some additional elements of reflection (Nicolo 2018). In particular, it is Sereni's story that reveals the pervasiveness and depth of a revolutionary anthropology that aspired to transform the world after a preliminary self-transformation that would lead to a new morality clear of the waste of old experiences and cultural heritage.[21] His Stalinist turn was in fact based on the negation of values, affections, and relations that led to the peculiar submission of the individual and of his moral autonomy to the ethics of the Party.

[19] Fondazione Gramsci of Rome. Archivio del Partito comunista italiano. Movimento dei Partigiani della Pace. Fondo M, 1952, microfilm 0349/1 and 1953 microfilm 0408.

[20] We know from historical documents that some representatives of the Israeli communities turned to Communist leaders directly, in the hope of creating diplomatic channels with countries of Eastern Europe, in particular with Poland, to go to the places where relatives and members of the Italian Jewish communities had died during the war.

[21] In a June 1949 report on the work of the Ufficio culturale (Office of Culture), Emilio Sereni, writing on the need to defend culture against cosmopolitanism and Americanism, touched on this point with extreme clarity: "Whoever is responsible for cultural work must, first of all, know that he is the representative of the working class among intellectuals and that he maintains a politics of alliance. Turning intellectuals towards Marxist means increasing their ability to bring alliances to the working class. And this should not come about by spreading psychological terrorism among comrades, because we intend to achieve this transformation through a real class struggle, a struggle fought within ourselves between the bourgeois culture that has formed us and the new one that must transform us." Fondazione Gramsci of Rome. Archivio del Partito comunista italiano. Commissione culturale. 1949. *Relazione sui lavori dell'ufficio nazionale per il lavoro culturale*, June 14-16.

After learning of the death of his brother Enzo in Dachau, Emilio wrote a letter dated November 1, 1945, to his loved ones in Palestine:

> I know that not even the horror of Dachau could defeat him …. In the huge horror … in the massacre fields … of death, a man is a number, a man among millions … and those millions of men will forever remain alive in us with a name, in one single man: Enzo (Sereni 2011).

There was never a reference, in this long, sad letter, to the fact that those "men" had died there because they were Jews. Here, however, the right of historical interpretation ends, and the enigmatic, unfathomable voice of the human soul remains.

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The Italian Communists and Socialists' Reading of the Six-Day War and Its Consequences

Claudio Brillanti

Introduction

The Six-Day War (5–10 June 1967) has often been described as the event that determined the "anti-Israeli turning-point" of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) and the start of a harsh debate between the latter and the Unified Socialist Party (PSU), which instead firmly defended the Jewish State (Tas 1971; Molinari 1995; and partly Baldacci 2014). This representation, while not completely groundless, appears to be too simplistic, and even misleading. Several studies have shown that, already in the years following the first Arab-Israeli war, the attitude of the Communists had begun to change and a sort of disillusionment against Israel had emerged, together with a growing attention to the Arab world (Vivacqua 2005; Riccardi 2006; Santese 2007; Brillanti 2018; Tarquini 2019). While such evolution was perfectly in line with the changes occurring in the Soviet Union's Middle Eastern policy (cf. Golan 1991), the support provided by

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Italian—and international—Communism to the Jewish cause at the moment of the foundation of Israel had also been partially ambiguous, concealing the failure to overcome the traditional Marxist opposition to Zionism as the solution to the Jewish question (on this subject, refer to Traverso 1997). Moreover, in the second half of the Fifties, the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) had experienced a troubled transitory phase. Having abandoned the united-front and pro-Soviet policy, and having resumed the relationships with the Italian Democratic Socialist Party (PSDI) and the Socialist International, Pietro Nenni's party had changed its approach to the problems of the Jewish minorities in the countries of the Communist bloc, and regained interest in the country of the *kibbutzim* (Tarquini 2007: 196–216), also in the attempt to reassert its distinct identity and political culture.

Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the Eshkol Government's decision to respond to Nasser's threats and provocations with a pre-emptive war and its (persistent) consequences on the Middle Eastern geopolitical framework make the Six-Day War a divide in the history of that area, as well as an event destined to have profound repercussions on the Jewish State's image, leading large strata of public opinion—especially Leftists—to shift «from solidarity with the persecuted Jews to criticism of the Israeli aggressors» (Toscano 2003: 294).[1]

This essay retraces the positions taken by the main forces of the Italian Left during the Six-Day War and during the re-emergence—in the following years—of the (national) Palestinian question. It will focus on some significant aspects of their analysis and argumentations, trying to highlight political motivations and ideological-cultural matrices, questioning their implications with regards to the relationship between the Left and the Jews, as well as the complex issue of the boundary between anti-Zionism and antisemitism.

The Six-Day War and the "Specter" of Antisemitism

When, in May 1967, tensions between Israel and the neighboring Arab States acquired international significance, the Italian parties were preparing for an important round of administrative elections, and the Left was united only against the Vietnam War. On one side there was the PSU, which—as established at the time of the reunification between PSI and

[1] All Italian quotes are translated by the author.

PSDI (30 October 1966)—recognized the obligations deriving from the Atlantic Pact and partook in the center-left Moro III Cabinet. On the other side, there were the PCI and the Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity (PSIUP), both on the opposition, and closely linked to the USSR. The Middle East crisis provided a further topic of discussion, giving rise to a very harsh political-ideological clash, with ethical and symbolic implications, that were reflected also in the judgments on the line of "equidistance" carried out by the then Christian Democrat Foreign Minister Amintore Fanfani, with some paradoxical results.

On 24 May, both the PCI Directorate and the PSU Secretariat proclaimed, as a priority goal, the peacekeeping in the Middle East. However, their first official documents conveyed two opposite interpretations of the events that would lead up to the conflict.

The Communists reaffirmed «the positions repeatedly expressed in the past on the recognition of the State of Israel's right to its full national independence», and attributed the responsibility of the crisis to the maneuvers of the imperialist powers in the region.[2] A few days later, however, specifying that these maneuvers were part of the United States' global policy aimed at damaging the liberation movements and the "progressive regimes" arisen in different areas of the world, the PCI Directorate stated that the «peaceful future of the State of Israel» depended on the «refusal […] to tie its fate to the most aggressive imperialist forces».[3] The PSIUP Directorate was even more explicit, expressing its solidarity with the progressive forces of the Arab world, and inviting the Israeli Socialists «to oppose the policy that [made] their country an outpost of imperialism» and protected interests contrary to those of the «Israeli people itself».[4]

Meanwhile, the PCI and PSIUP press gave credit to rumors of an imminent Israeli aggression against Syria, corroborated by Moscow, and claimed that Nasser, by demanding the withdrawal of UNEF forces from Sinai and closing the Gulf of Aqaba to the ships bound for Israel, not only «had done nothing but restore the *status quo ante* 1956», but also contributed to thwart an "imperialist conspiracy" and to save the peace.[5]

[2] 1967. Un comunicato della Direzione del Pci. *L'Unità*, May 25.

[3] 1967. Il comunicato della Direzione del Pci. *L'Unità*, May 31.

[4] 1967. Psiup e Medio Oriente. Comunicato della Direzione. *Mondo nuovo*, June 4. However, also in this document—dated 31 May—was stated that peace should be based on the «coexistence» of the State of Israel with the Arab countries.

[5] Savioli, Arminio. 1967. Rivelati al Cairo i piani della aggressione USA. *L'Unità*, May 27. See also e.p. [Polito, Ennio]. 1967. Primo scacco. *L'Unità*, May 28; and Costa, Mario. 1967. Una "prova generale" prima dello scontro. *Mondo nuovo*, May 28.

Differently, the PSU Secretariat defined the unilateral changes along the borders as a «threat to peace», and urged a «mobilization […] against the antisemitic factors and every form of racism that contribute to making peaceful coexistence between peoples even more difficult».[6] However, Nenni himself drew the guidelines that shaped the Socialist position, giving voice to the apprehension for the fate of Israel of a great part of the Italian public opinion. During a series of electoral rallies, he distinguished the legitimate struggle of the Arab peoples against the remnants of colonialism from the deplorable anti-Israeli policy of their governments, and he linked with increasing clarity «the defense of the Jewish State not only […] to the memory of the Shoah […] but to the joint [memories] of extermination and Resistance» (Di Figlia 2012: 51).[7]

While the attitude of the PSU President and Vice-President of the Council of Ministers could also be influenced by personal factors (and especially by the fact that Nenni's daughter Vittoria died in Auschwitz in 1943), the idea that the Israeli population was composed by the survivors of Hitler's "final solution" and had given birth to «a political and social experience that blends the ideals of democracy and socialism» was deeply rooted in the party.[8] Probably not all the Socialists would have asserted that the foundation of Israel had «solved one of the biggest problems in the world, that is to say, Judaism's nature as a state, class or religion», as the former Actionist Aldo Garosci wrote in the Sunday column of *Avanti!*, "Tempo nostro".[9] However, the Soviet attempt to exploit the «Arab racial hatred against Israel», in order to force the USA to reduce their commitment in Southeast Asia, was deemed unacceptable.[10]

During the heated controversy developed in the days preceding the outbreak of the war, Socialists and Communists accused each other of being misled by the distortion of the key concepts of "imperialism" and "anti-imperialism". Socialists seized the opportunity to condemn «the Manichaean distinctions» that led Communists to divide the world «into

[6] 1967. I socialisti per il Medio Oriente. *Avanti!*, May 25

[7] The speeches given by Nenni in Pisa, Siena, Catania and Palermo were widely reported on *Avanti!*, 1967, May 26 and 28, June 6 and 10.

[8] 1967. Il discorso del compagno Nenni a Pisa. *Avanti!*, May 26. During the electoral campaign, the PSU Secretaries, Mario Tanassi and Francesco De Martino, proposed similar argumentations and—like Nenni—explained that the solidarity with Israel did not disavow the traditional anti-colonialism. Cf. *Avanti!*, 1967, May 28 and 30.

[9] Garosci, Aldo. 1967. Diplomazia e politica. *Avanti!*, May 21.

[10] Vasconi, Luciano. 1967. Israele falso scopo. *Avanti!*, May 24.

forces of peace and forces of war, along a line coinciding entirely with the blocs», and therefore to mistake the aggressive nationalism of the Arab regimes supported by Moscow for anti-imperialism.[11] Communists, on the other hand, argued that the Socialist "comrades" had forgotten what imperialism was, and did not realize that the main threat to world peace came from US politics.[12] Again, two readings of the Middle Eastern scenario deriving from two antithetical visions of the international balances were confronting each other: while the Socialist one focused on the (theoretical) objective of overcoming the blocs, the Communist one was still based on the (dogmatic) identification with one of the two.

However, another aspect is worth highlighting. The Communists—as pointed out by Luca Riccardi—tried to «steer the political debate away from the trap of antisemitism» (Riccardi 2006: 261), explaining the Arabs' aversion to Israel with purely political reasons,[13] and downplaying Nasser's most extreme statements, which might «deceive the Italian reader leading him to give credence to the creation of an over-excited atmosphere of fanaticism».[14] Nevertheless, the Communists were accused by the media, and also by the press close to the PSU, of supporting regimes that were branded as "National Socialist", since they hosted Nazi criminals and openly proclaimed that they wanted to annihilate the Jewish State. With particular emotional participation, Garosci and another former Actionist, Paolo Vittorelli, observed that, «for the Jewish people, the alternative is to

[11] Arfè, Gaetano. 1967. Non abbiamo paura di confonderci. Non abbiamo paura di distinguerci. *Avanti!*, May 28. Cf. also Garosci, Aldo. 1967. "Imperialismi" e "nazionalismi". *Avanti!*, May 14; Arfè, Gaetano. 1967. La pace può e deve prevalere. *Avanti!*, May 23; Orlandi, Flavio. 1967. Marciatori a senso unico. *Avanti!*, May 25; G.A. [Arfè, Gaetano]. 1967. Logica della pace e logica dei blocchi. *Avanti!*, May 25; Garosci, Aldo. 1967. La bestia dell'apocalisse. *Avanti!*, May 28; Orlandi, Flavio. 1967. Contro la guerra contro l'aggressione. *Avanti!*, June 4.

[12] Ferrara, Maurizio. 1967. Dal Vietnam al Mediterraneo. *L'Unità*, May 24; Ferrara, Maurizio. 1967. "Democratici" ma razzisti. *L'Unità*, May 28; Pavolini, Luca. 1967. La sinistra e Israele. *Rinascita*, June 9.

[13] Cf. for example 1967. Un'intervista del segretario del Pci sulla gravità della situazione internazionale e interna. *L'Unità*, June 4.

[14] Savioli, Arminio. 1967. Dibattito alle Nazioni Unite. Il presidente siriano a Mosca. *L'Unità*, May 30. See also A. Savioli, Arminio. 1967. «Noi non siamo razzisti: vogliamo solo tornare nella nostra patria». *L'Unità*, June 1, which, to «unmask the hypocritical reactionary campaign tending to use in Italy the memory of Auschwitz in a pro-imperialist function», reported a conversation with a Palestinian who branded the Israel's Jewish nature as «insane».

exist or not exist», an alternative that could not be accepted from those who had contributed to the struggle against Nazi-Fascism.[15]

For a party that derived its legitimacy in the Italian political system from participating in the Resistance, this was an extremely delicate issue. It was not enough to present Israeli society as contrary to the policy pursued by its ruling class,[16] and to denounce the existence of a press campaign imbued with anti-Arab racism, which mystified Communist positions, and aimed at halting the transversal mobilization against the Vietnam War. Therefore, Gian Carlo Pajetta asserted that for the Communists, Israel's «independence» represented «the continuation of the struggle against racism and antisemitism that had seen [them] together with the Jewish fighters in the Resistance, in the extermination camps of Auschwitz and Mauthausen». According to him, to deserve the infamous epithet of "antisemites" were rather «those who believe they can play Israel as a card in the great game of oil» (the USA) and «those who more modestly would like to play that card like a trump card, looking for a few votes, maybe for an administrative election» (Nenni and the PSU).[17]

Meanwhile, however, the relationship with the Italian Jewish Communities was also complicating, as proven by the participation of the representatives of all the parties, except those of the PCI and the PSIUP, in the meeting for Israel, organized by the Jewish Roman Community on 28 May at the Portico d'Ottavia. Moreover, the telegram sent by the Roman Communist Federation to the President of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities (UCII), Sergio Piperno, allowed Socialists to talk of divergences within the PCI and, above all, to report the discomfort and embarrassment of many Communists, torn «between the necessity to adapt to the USSR foreign policy, and the requirement to remain faithful

[15] Garosci, Aldo. 1967. La stretta dell'assedio. *Avanti!*, June 4. Cf. also Vittorelli, Paolo. 1967. La pace fra arabi e Israele. Mondo Operaio, June.

[16] To this purpose, great emphasis was given not only to Israeli Communists' appeals, but also to a 1957 speech by former Labor Prime Minister Moshe Sharett (1967. Un difficile problema di convivenza tra lo Stato di Israele e gli arabi. *L'Unità*, May 26).

[17] Pajetta, Gian Carlo. 1967. Primo: la pace. *L'Unità*, May 26. Cf. also 1967. A chi giova la menzogna? *L'Unità*, May 30; Napolitano, Giorgio. 1967. Gravità della crisi e pretesti elettorali. *L'Unità*, May 30; Ferrara, Maurizio. 1967. Bugiardi e razzisti. *L'Unità*, May 31. Similar argumentations informed Ardenti, Piero. 1967. La cattiva coscienza. *Mondo nuovo*, June 4.

to those values that urged them to fight against Nazism and antisemitism during the Resistance».[18]

When, on 5 June 1967, the war broke out, the Directorates of both the PSU and the PCI, gathering in extraordinary meetings, interpreted the common wish for an immediate cease-fire in two opposite ways. The PSU spoke of a «declaration of war [against Israel] by all Arab States», and blamed the inaction of the United Nations and Europe in the face of the «threat of genocide» weighing on the Jewish State.[19] The PCI, instead, urged the «democratic forces» and popular masses to extend «the unitary struggle in defense of peace and against imperialism», emphasizing again «the close connection» between Middle Eastern events and the «American aggression in Vietnam». Furthermore, the PCI invited the government to «declare its full neutrality in the conflict».[20]

According to the Communists and the Social Proletarians, a radical pro-Atlantic front—led by Nenni and the Republican Ugo La Malfa—had been formed and had pressured the acceptance of the Anglo-American proposal to establish a multilateral force to crack the Aqaba blockade. While they kept pointing out the contradictions of the government's foreign policy, therefore, they could not help but appreciate Fanfani's prudence,[21] which, instead, was criticized by the Socialists.

During the Council of Ministers on 17 June, the existing divergences within the majority gave rise to a harsh confrontation between the Vice-president of the Council and the Foreign Minister, leading the latter to abandon the meeting (D'Ascanio 2008). But already on 9 June, Nenni stressed the commitment of the PSU's exponents «against every

[18] 1967. Numerose adesioni alla veglia per Israele. *Avanti!*, May 28. Cf. also C.S. [Scaringi, Carlo]. 1967. Imponente manifestazione per Israele. *Avanti!*, May 30; and L'Osservatore. 1967. Il partito della guerra. *Critica sociale,* June 5, in which the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was recalled to assert that now the Communists did not even have the «extenuating» of the absolute loyalty, imposed by Stalinism.

[19] 1967. I socialisti. *Avanti!*, June 6. The matter of the first shot fired was considered secondary—if not misleading—to establish the responsibilities of the war. See also Vittorelli, Paolo. 1967. Diritto alla vita o sterminio. *Avanti!*, June 6; and Scaringi, Carlo. 1967. Un Paese accerchiato dalla creazione. *Avanti!*, June 6.

[20] 1967. Un comunicato della Direzione del Pci. *L'Unità*, June 5, extraordinary ed.

[21] Cf. Jacoviello, Alberto. 1967. L'Italia nel Mediterraneo. *L'Unità*, May 30; 1967. "Interventisti". *L'Unità*, June 8; and the Mauro Scoccimarro's speech at the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee on 7 June. As for the PSIUP, see 1967. Una dichiarazione di Vecchietti. *Mondo nuovo*, June 11; Valori, Dario. 1967. Dove sono arrivati. *Mondo nuovo*, June 25; and Lami, Francesco. 1967. Nenni guida gli ultras. *Mondo nuovo*, June 25.

desertion, laxity, indifference passed off as equidistance, in front of facts in which what was at stake was not only the fate of the Israelites, survivors of the *progroms* [sic] or of the crematoria, not only the peace and the future of the Arab peoples, but the world peace». Nenni supported his claims by citing «the condemnation of antisemitism that was one of the highest moments of Resistance's moral greatness», on which he also based the condemnation of the PCI's pro-Arab position.[22]

A few days earlier, Nenni had been received by the President of the Republic, former PSDI Secretary Giuseppe Saragat, who was «more than optimistic […] euphoric» for the first successes obtained by the Israel Defense Forces (Nenni 1983: 74). However, according to the Socialists, these ought not to make people forget the dangers faced by the Jewish State and the fact that the UN had intervened «only after Israel [had] managed to prevent being exterminated».[23]

Despite admitting that there was also «the matter of the Arab States' recognition of Israel's reality»,[24] the PCI's press saw in the developments of the war, and in the statements of some members of the Eshkol Government, the confirmation of the «Israeli military initiative's offensive character, aimed at undermining the most advanced forces and systems of the Arab world». Not only the Communists supported the need to impose on Israel the withdrawal from the occupied territories, but it also highlighted how the idea of transforming military successes into territorial conquests was not new, but rather «the idea that Israel, after all, [had] applied in 1948 and in 1956», contradicting «the myth of the "small defenseless country"».[25]

While for Communists and Social Proletarians the Arab-Israeli conflict was always placed in the context of the struggle between imperialist and

[22] 1967. Nenni: consolidare la vittoria della pace. *Avanti!*, June 10. Cf. for example the parliamentary question to the Foreign Minister, in Atti Parlamentari, Senato della Repubblica, Legislatura IV, seduta del 30 maggio 1967, p. 3414.

[23] Gerardi, Franco. 1967. Una forza autonoma per la pace e il progresso. *Avanti!*, June 11. See also La Critica Sociale. 1967. Conclusioni sulla guerra e prospettive per la pace nel Medio Oriente. *Critica sociale*, June 20.

[24] Ferrara, Maurizio. 1967. Salvare la pace. *L'Unità*, June 6.

[25] Ferrara, Maurizio. 1967. Le condizioni della pace. *L'Unità*, June 11. Cf. also Jacoviello, Alberto. 1967. Il fondo del problema. *L'Unità*, June 7; and e.p. [Polito, Ennio]. 1967. L'aggressione "rende"? *L'Unità*, June 11. As for the PSIUP's weekly, see Avolio, Giuseppe. 1967. La pace è indivisibile. *Mondo nuovo*, June 11; and Costa, Mario. 1967. Falliti gli obiettivi politici di Dayan. *Mondo nuovo*, June 18.

anti-imperialist forces,[26] the repeated accusations of not worrying about the fate of Israeli Jews in the event of an Arab victory continued to constitute a problem. Pajetta did not only emphasize that their ideology considered any form of racism repulsive. He also asserted that supporting those forces of the Arab world that had turned to Socialism did not prevent them from saying that «Israel's *destruction* [was] an absurd and wrong objective for the Arab anti-imperialist movement», regardless of the reasons that had led the powers to establish the State of Israel. In any case, for Pajetta, what ought to be especially rejected was «the identification of the struggle against antisemitism and discrimination, anywhere in the world, with the policy of the State of Israel's ruling class».[27] Similarly, Lucio Luzzatto wrote on the PSIUP's weekly that «the identification of the State of Israel with the citizens of Jewish origin of any other country is false and very dangerous», noting that if the Arab intentions of extermination were inadmissible, a part of the press had used the «word "genocide"» for propaganda purposes.[28]

The New Face of the Jewish State, Between the "Burden" of a Sensational Military Victory and the Myth of the Palestinian "Resistance"

In only six days of war, the IDF conquered the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, the Golan Heights and the West Bank (including the Old City of Jerusalem), an area three-and-a-half times larger than Israel, making it the country with the largest Palestinian minority (Morris 2005: 416, 424). On 15 June 1967, the Directorates of both the PCI and the PSU emphasized the need to transform the precarious cease-fire into a real peace, and to solve the "refugee problem". The PCI Directorate presented the «annexationist and expansionist claims of the Israeli leaders» as the most dangerous obstacle to an arrangement that would «guarantee at the same time the legitimate rights of the Arab countries, and the right of the State

[26] Ledda, Romano. 1967. "Guerra santa" o lotta antimperialista? *L'Unità*, June 9; and Ardenti, Piero. 1967. Una guerra provocata dall'imperialismo. *Mondo nuovo*, June 11.

[27] Pajetta, Gian Carlo. 1967. Per un giudizio non manicheo sul conflitto nel M.O. *L'Unità*, June 7.

[28] Luzzatto, Lucio. 1967. Un cattivo servizio. *Mondo nuovo*, June 18.

of Israel to exist, refusing any reward for the aggression».[29] The PSU Directorate, instead, did not restrict itself to hoping that the Arabs would acquire the awareness that their problems «cannot be solved with a crusader spirit or with holy wars». Declaring itself in favor of an authentic «peaceful coexistence» among the peoples of the Middle East, outside of any foreign interference, it also spoke of «the safeguard of the legitimate interests of the Arab States» and invited the Israeli people to «a test of responsibility and moderation equal to the courage with which it has defended its right to existence».[30]

A few days later, the PSIUP Directorate stated «the State of Israel's right to exist and the rejection of its cancellation by force», while pointing out that Israel had been founded when «the colonialists were apparently leaving Palestine, with the aim of using it as their bridgehead», and that a real peace would be impossible until the Israeli ruling class would cease playing this role, now on behalf of US imperialism. Furthermore, the Social Proletarians asserted that the Jewish question not only could not be solved with Zionism, but was part of the «general question of democracy», which must guarantee the equality of all citizens.[31]

As is known, despite the UN Security Council Resolution no. 242 (22 November 1967), diplomatic initiatives succeeded each other for years without being able to bring peace in the area, complicated by the activity of Palestinian organizations. Especially after the Battle of Karameh (21 March 1968), and also through clamorous terrorist actions, the Palestinian organizations became the focus of global public opinion as a new (and autonomous) protagonist of the Middle Eastern scenario. Nonetheless, these official stances represent a valid starting-point to understand what, for the various souls of the Italian Left, was a fair and equitable solution to the controversy, in the aftermath of the Six-Day War and in the following years.

The first aspect worth emphasizing is the "rebuke to Israel" contained in the Socialists' statement, which the Republicans connected to the

[29] La Direzione del P.C.I. 1967. Per un negoziato di pace. *L'Unità*, June 16. Cf. also Pajetta, Gian Carlo. 1967. Sabotaggio della pace. *L'Unità*, July 6; and Berlinguer, Enrico. 1967. L'Italia e gli aggressori. *L'Unità*, July 9.

[30] 1967. La riunione della Direzione socialista. *Avanti!*, June 16. Cf. also Orlandi, Flavio. 1967. La via della pace. *Avanti!*, June 25.

[31] 1967. I problemi del Medio Oriente e la lotta contro l'imperialismo. *Mondo nuovo*, July 2. The proposal to constitute «a new State in the territories snatched from Jordan to confine Palestinian refugees» was considered functional to the «Israel's expansionist plans».

differences existing within the PSU.[32] Actually, at that time, the left-wing current disputed only the attempt of some exponents coming from the PSDI to alter the meaning of unanimously adopted documents in order to place them in an Atlanticist perspective.[33] According to Socialists, the recognition of the Jewish State constituted the «indispensable condition and premise» of any negotiation, but it was necessary to achieve «a peace without losers or winners», in order to prevent further rancor and intentions of revenge among the Arabs.[34] In a certain way, the Socialists seemed to understand the great dilemma of the Israeli leaders between keeping territories that would have guaranteed more defensible borders and were part of the "biblical Land of Israel" (but were inhabited by Palestinian Arabs), and renouncing them in exchange for a real détente with the Arab world, and to avoid endangering the Jewish character of the State; an alternative that concerned also «the evolution of Zionism».[35] In the PSU press, different orientations coexisted and debated,[36] and even intellectuals like Garosci, who considered the occupation of the territories conquered by the war an «odious necessity», were convinced that Israel could be interested in «geographically less appealing borders and a better balance of population, as compared to today's situation».[37] But there were also those who claimed that «coexistence, cohabitation and friendship between different nationalities should be experienced within Israel itself, between Jews and Arabs, within a multi-national (or multi-racial) State».[38]

[32] See 1967. *La Voce repubblicana*, June 16–17.

[33] Cf. the debate at the Central Committee meeting of 30 June–1 July (*Avanti!*, 1967, July 1 and 2); but also the heated argument between Riccardo Lombardi and Antonio Cariglia (*Avanti!*, 1967, July 14, 18, 19, 20, 22).

[34] Gozzano, Francesco. 1967. La via della pace passa attraverso la convivenza fra Israele e Stati arabi. *Avanti!*, June 11; 1967. Ritorno alla ragione. *Avanti!*, June 9. Cf. Tamburrano, Giuseppe. 1967. Una coerenza ideale e storica. *Avanti!*, June 16, that linked the PSU's line to the Italian Socialism's internationalist, pacifist and anti-imperialist tradition.

[35] Benzoni, Alberto. 1967. Il conflitto arabo-israeliano: postille per un dibattito. *Mondo operaio*, August-September, which exhorted to reflect on the fact that «not even the Israeli Left [was] immune from the nationalist virus». On the debate within the Israeli Government, refer to Shlaim 2003: 289–299; Mejcher 2004: 209–220.

[36] Cf. especially Vasconi, Luciano. 1967. Il dilemma di Israele. *Critica sociale*, October 5; Targetti, Lodovico, and Vasconi, Luciano. 1967. Su "il dilemma d'Israele". *Critica sociale*, November 20.

[37] Garosci, Aldo. 1968. Medio Oriente: sistemazione del provvisorio? *Avanti!*, January 17; Garosci, Aldo. 1967. M.O. tra armistizio e pace. *Avanti!*, October 22.

[38] Vasconi, Luciano. Medio Oriente: adesso ricostruire la pace. *Critica sociale*, June 20.

This perspective had already been described as being «consistent with a secular view of political organization» by the director of *Rinascita*, Luca Pavolini, in an article explaining that the Communists had not even wondered if the creation of Israel in the heart of the Arab world had been a mistake, considering it «a historical fact», but focused on «the problem of what kind of State it is, and which political direction it has».[39] And this represents the second point on which pausing is worthwhile.

The PCI continued to officially support «a solution to the Middle Eastern conflict that erases the effects of the Israeli aggression».[40] Nonetheless, its press did not simply represent Israel as «an aggressor State, with expansionist aims […] that are part of a broader imperialist plan»,[41] rebelling against «the attempt, grotesque at the very least, to brand with the antisemite label» all those who rejected the «"lightning wars" of General Dayan».[42] The Communists also aimed to show how the two elements which supported «the myth of an Israeli "Socialism", the *kibbutz* and the nationalized enterprises of the *Histadrut*», were misleading, and argued that the «racial-religious ideology that imprints the Israelite State» could explain its conduct.[43] Zionism was criticized as a political movement that, proposing to «reunite in Palestine—*in a Jewish State*—all the Jews currently scattered around the world», required Israel to follow a discriminatory and expansionist policy, and that led the Jews of the Diaspora to renounce «the real struggle they must carry out in order to definitively banish all forms of antisemitism».[44] The Communist press also compared Israel to other «former colonies that, thanks to the

[39] Pavolini, Luca. 1967. La sinistra e Israele. *Rinascita*, June 9.

[40] La Direzione del Pci. 1968. Impegno di lotta e iniziativa unitaria per profonde trasformazioni sociali. *L'Unità*, September 19.

[41] Cossutta, Armando. 1967. Presenza delle masse. *L'Unità*, July 30. On this regard, emblematic seems Jacoviello, Alberto. 1969. La "Prussia" del Medio Oriente. *L'Unità*, April 23.

[42] Jacoviello, Alberto. 1967. Agli amici di Israele. *L'Unità*, June 13. Cf. also Trombadori, Antonello. 1967. Da Anna Frank a Moshe Dayan. *L'Unità*, June 8.

[43] Ledda, Romano. 1967. Lo scontro di classe nei kibbutz. *L'Unità*, July 20. Cf. for example Ledda, Romano. 1967. Le contraddizioni di Israele. *L'Unità*, June 13; Jacoviello, Alberto. 1967. Condannati all'aggressione? *L'Unità*, June 23.

[44] Della Seta, Piero. 1968. Israele ha snaturato i rapporti tra arabi e ebrei. *L'Unità*, January 6. During the debate on Israel promoted by the Communist newspaper, this interpretation would have been re-proposed by Piero Della Seta, during 1970, in the articles Il sionismo contro Israele. *L'Unità*, February 21; and Il sionismo contro gli ebrei. *L'Unità*, April 2.

settlement of skilled white colonists, the arrival of huge capitals […] and the exploitation of indigenous people, […] do not represent oases of social justice, but of modern capitalism».[45]

Since 1968, these readings led to an increasing attention towards the struggle of the «Palestinian Resistance forces» against «the theocratic-religious and racial structure of the Israeli State».[46] Even before the first official contacts with Fatah in 1969, the PCI press had already denied the possibility of accusing the Palestinian guerrillas of "terrorism", arguing that «terrorists were our partisans for the Nazis, the Algerians for the French, the Vietnamese for the Americans»,[47] and that the Israelis did not hesitate to resort to «techniques used by the Nazis and the French *paras*».[48] In the secular, democratic and non-discriminating State prefigured by Yasser Arafat's movement, the Communists saw the possibility of withdrawing from the apparent crossroads between the acceptance of «the expulsion of an entire people from its homeland» and the unacceptable target of the destruction of Israel, through «a position of unassailable internationalism».[49]

Such stands exposed the Communists to accusations of a «shift» towards antisemitism (Di Nola 1973: 32). However, not everyone within the PCI shared this approach, which echoed Maxime Rodinson's theses on the "de-Zionization" of Israel. There were also some significant—though isolated—dissociations, coming from militants and executives of Jewish origin. In July 1969, Umberto Terracini, in an open letter to *l'Unità*, observed that «the right to national autonomy» of the Jewish people had «historically expressed itself in the specific form of the State of Israel». He reproached the newspaper for having deviated from the «meditated

[45] M. Robersi [Valabrega, Guido]. 1967. L'efficienza di Israele. *L'Unità*, June 12.

[46] Ledda, Romano. 1968. La "Grande Israele" caccia gli arabi dai loro villaggi. *L'Unità*, February 13. Cf. Ledda, Romano. 1968. La Resistenza palestinese. *Rinascita*, May 3; Ledda, Romano. 1969. Un popolo che vuole diventare nazione. *L'Unità*, February 3; Della Seta, Piero. 1969. "Fidayin": una rottura con il passato. *L'Unità*, February 7.

[47] Ledda, Romano. 1968. Il boomerang della persecuzione del popolo palestinese. *L'Unità*, November 30. However, the PCI would have distanced itself from the practice of aircraft hijacking and firmly condemned actions such as the Lod Airport massacre (30 May 1972).

[48] Pintore, Gianfranco. 1968. Ghetto arabo a Gerusalemme? *L'Unità*, July 27.

[49] Della Seta, Piero. 1969. Al Fath: quattro chiavi di un impetuoso sviluppo. *L'Unità*, February 16. Cf. also Ledda, Romano. Una dinamica progressista investe tutto il mondo arabo. *L'Unità*, November 22, which praised the secular, democratic, national and anti-imperialist contents of the Al Fatah program.

stance» of the party, *de facto* denying the legitimacy of Israel as a Jewish State.[50]

Moreover, the Social Proletarians—who used an even stronger language toward Israel, laden with symbolic references to Jewish history and to the Shoah[51]—could support «the Palestinian people's struggle of resistance»,[52] considering the UN Resolution no. 242 useless. The sympathy for the Palestinian cause, instead, introduced a basic contradiction in the PCI line, that tried to make this aspect coexist with the support to a diplomatic solution between Israel and the Arab States based on that document, well-liked by the USSR, but rejected by Palestinian organizations.[53] However, the prospect of a bi-national State became so popular among readers of *l'Unità* that when, at the moment of the Kippur War, the PCI Secretary, Enrico Berlinguer, spoke of a peace based on «the rights of all States, including the State of Israel, and of all peoples, including the Arab Palestinian people»,[54] a reader reported that «in some recent documents» there was «an affirmation that […] seems equivocal» about Israel's rights.[55]

It was observed that when, in December 1968, Nenni became Foreign Minister of the Rumor Cabinet, even «his position on the conflict recorded a slight, but significant, evolution» (Marzano, Schwarz 2013: 52), since, following the IDF raid at Beirut Airport, he condemned «any use of

[50] Terracini, Umberto, and Pajetta, Gian Carlo. 1969. Il nostro giornale e il Medio Oriente. Una lettera del compagno Umberto Terracini e la risposta del compagno Gian Carlo Pajetta. *L'Unità*, July 25. More generally, on this subject refer to Riccardi 2006: 298–308, 422–439.

[51] Cf. Costa, Mario. 1967. Tel Aviv vuole imporre una "soluzione israeliana". *Mondo nuovo*, July 16, that accused the Eshkol Government of wanting to create «a huge lager» in which to confine the Palestinians; and the reportage by Aldo Nobile, "Israele '70", *Mondo nuovo*, 1970, April 5, 12, 19, that, describing «a theocratic and racist State» which could not have developed otherwise due to the «1948 "original sin"», asserted that «the "home of the persecuted" has turned into an oppressor people due to the Zionist setting of the State».

[52] Tagliazucchi, Pino. 1968. Medio Oriente un anno dopo. *Mondo nuovo*, June 9. According to the PSIUP too, this struggle «did not pass through the destruction of Israel, but required a profound evolution of its social, political and juridical structures».

[53] Cf. for example Pajetta 1970; and 1970. I comunisti e la crisi nel Medio Oriente. *L'Unità*, March 3.

[54] 1973. Una dichiarazione di Berlinguer. *L'Unità*, October 8. Cf. also 1973. Comunicato della Direzione del Pci. *L'Unità*, October 10.

[55] 1973. Lo Stato d'Israele e i diritti del popolo palestinese. *L'Unità*, October 17. The editorial staff answered by shifting the attention again on the «nature of that State».

violence even in the form of terrorist attacks and reprisals».[56] Nonetheless, his was not an adaptation to the previously criticized "equidistance" of Italy, imposed by the new institutional assignment, and it did not lessen his closeness to the Jewish State, as proven by his visit to Israel in May 1971 and—perhaps even more—by the one taken a few months later to Beijing, where, at the request of his friend Golda Meir, he tried (in vain) to induce China to review its position on the Middle East.[57] Rather, as highlighted by Alessandra Tarquini, between the late Sixties and the early Seventies, «the Socialists' support for Israel became more problematic» (Tarquini 2007: 221). And this is the last point to be analyzed.

Until the PSU's disappointing result in the elections of 19 May 1968, which led to a new split (5 July 1969), the *Avanti!* had described the Palestinian «refugees» as «pawns in the hands of the Arab governors who move, play or lose them to strengthen their shaky regimes».[58] Afterwards, the Social Democrats defended «Israel's right to security»,[59] claiming that the withdrawal from occupied territories established by the UN Resolution did not imply returning to the 1949 boundaries, «neither "secure" nor "recognized"».[60] Furthermore, they distinguished the «tragedy of the refugees» from the «immense fraud» that presented «the "Palestinian resistance" as the solution to the problem of the Levant».[61] Only faced with the Jordanian "Black September", they had to recognize the need to guarantee to Palestinians «a legal and economic situation that would safeguard their full personality», placing as sole condition the preservation of the autonomy of Israel, and thus rejecting the prospect of a Palestinian bi-national State.[62]

[56] 1969. L'Italia disposta a contribuire per giungere alla pace nel M.O. *Avanti!*, January 10.

[57] Cf. Nenni 1983: 594–601, 654–657; and Pietro Nenni Archive, Carteggi, Carteggio 1944-79, *Golda Meir*. Fondazione Pietro Nenni.

[58] Scaringi, Carlo. 1968. Un settimo giorno che dura da molti mesi. *Avanti!*, February 18.

[59] See the report of the Secretary, Mauro Ferri, to the Directorate of the Unitary Socialist Party (which in 1971 resumed the old name of PSDI), in *Umanità*, 1970, October 22–23.

[60] 1971. Due guerre. L'Islam e l'Onu. *Umanità*, November 23–24. Cf. also 1971. Intervista di Ferri a «Shalom». *Umanità*, April 1–2.

[61] [Garosci, Aldo?]. 1970. Tragedia e truffa dei palestinesi. *Umanità*, June 15–16. In addition to the articles appeared in the column "I pareri di Umanità", and attributable to the director Aldo Garosci, cf. also 1970. Terroristi e guerriglieri. *Umanità*, February 11–12; and 1971. Fedayn: tragedia e farsa. *Umanità*, July 21–22.

[62] 1970. La relazione della Direzione del Psu al primo Congresso del partito. *Umanità*, December 14–15. Nonetheless, [Garosci, Aldo?]. 1971. Il negoziato per il Levante.

On the other hand, the participation of some exponents of the PSI's left-wing at the *Mediterraneo '70* conference (22–23 November 1969), organized by the PCI and PSIUP, where two representatives of Fatah also participated, aroused several controversies. On the *Avanti!*, one of the many promoters of the Democratic Union Friends of Israel (UDAI), who militated in the PSI, denounced the discriminatory character of the initiative, precluded to the Israeli Left. Moreover, he denied the possibility of placing «the so-called guerrilla of the Arab terrorists, trained at the time by the SS German […], in the traditional wake of the partisan resistance», or to compare it with the experiences of the Viet Cong and the Castroists, because «the purpose of their struggle remains the destruction of Israel […] one of the most socially and politically advanced countries in the world».[63]

The presence within the PSI of contrasting opinions on the conflict was admitted by the new Party Secretary in July 1970, in an interview with *Shalom*, the monthly magazine of the Jewish Community of Rome. Giacomo Mancini described the positions that emphasized the revolutionary and liberating element of the Arab peoples' struggle as «inexact», but also clarified that the defense of «the Jewish people's right to a free and independent life within a sovereign State, whose boundaries are internationally recognized and respected», could be considered «common heritage of the Party».[64]

Nonetheless, precisely during 1970, the PSI began to show greater attention to what was happening in the Arab world, and above all tried to reconcile the traditional closeness to Israel with a matured awareness of the political—and not only humanitarian—character of the Palestinian issue. More than the positive judgments on Nasser stated at the moment of his death, the behavior of the new chief of the Foreign Section, Luciano De Pascalis, is in this sense especially significant. After leading PSI delegations to Israel (4–10 January) and Egypt (17–23 September),[65] he described the fundamental points to resolve the conflict: «the recognition of Israel as an autonomous and legitimate State entity; the definition of

Umanità, January 4–5, claimed that «the war—despite the clamor of all the pro-Arab "Lefts"—does not make it a people, it does, at most, a crowd at the service of captains of fortune».

[63] Seniga, Giulio. 1969. È possibile in Palestina il "miracolo" della pace? *Avanti!*, November 26.

[64] 1970. Un'intervista di Mancini a «Shalom». *Avanti!*, July 28.

[65] Cf. the files *Israele delegazione del Psi and Delegazione Psi in Egitto*, in PSI Archive, Sezione Internazionale, Paesi esteri. Fondazione di studi storici Filippo Turati.

Israel's boundaries with respect to the Arab States on the basis of the withdrawal from the occupied territories; the recognition of the existence of a Palestinian Arab nation».[66]

As is well known, at the end of the Seventies «the balance of power between supporters of the Palestinians and defenders of Israel would be reversed» (Tarquini, 2007: 222), making Bettino Craxi's PSI one of the greatest supporters of the dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organization (Tarquini 2019: 262–271). Even before, however, also on the *Avanti!*, articles had been published that denounced the moral blackmail concealed behind «the confusion—also fomented by the Israel Government—between the Jews and the State of Israel» and the accusation of antisemitism addressed to those democrats who had fought Nazi-fascism, but condemned Israel's «expansionist policy».[67] Moreover, there was no lack of different judgments about the participation of the PSI to the *Per la pace e la giustizia nel Medio Oriente* conference and about the Kippur War, but at the time Craxi led the "pro-Israeli" faction.[68]

Conclusions

According to what has been said above, it is confirmed that after the Six-Day War «the use of the resistance paradigm as an interpretive key to the events involving Israel was […] twofold», and a significant part of the Italian Left used it to support the Palestinian cause (Simoni, Marzano 2010: 20). Upon concluding, however, it's especially necessary to question and reflect on the reasons and the implications of certain argumentations.

At the root of the Communists' objection to Zionism as a solution to the Jewish question there seem to be a typically Marxist *forma mentis*, which led to a incomprehension, if not a real «cultural and prejudicial refusal to recognize any diversity that does not find its origins in class relations», as noted by Guido Fubini (1989: 80–81). Thus, paradoxically, after having first criticized Israel's "role" and then its "nature", the

[66] De Pascalis, Luciano. 1970. Individuare i termini per la pace in Medio Oriente. *Avanti!*, November 22. Cf. also 1970. La posizione del PSI sul Medio Oriente. *Avanti!*, February 14; 1970. I socialisti per la pace in Medio Oriente. *Avanti!*, September 18; Fubini, Guido. 1971. Anche i palestinesi ai negoziati per il M.O. *Avanti!*, March 3.

[67] Banfi, Arialdo. 1973. Ebrei e Stato di Israele. *Avanti!*, January 9. See also the reply by a «painfully» amazed Carlo Momigliano, in *Avanti!*, 1973, January 1.

[68] Cf. especially 1972. Un'intervista di Craxi a un giornale israeliano. *Avanti!*, April 7; 1973. L'UDAI sul Medio Oriente. *Avanti!*, May 8; 1973. Deciso impegno italiano per un negoziato di pace. *Avanti!*, October 9.

Communists embraced (although with a lot of ambiguities) another national cause, the Palestinian one, underlining its anti-imperialist character and perceiving the purpose of destroying the "Zionist presence"—enunciated in the 1969 PLO Charter—as the internationalist solution that would have allowed the cohabitation of Arabs and Jews within a democratic and secular State.

Unlike the extra-parliamentary Left, Communists constantly tried to dispel «the concern that condemning Israeli politics and Zionism might lead, somehow, to antisemitism», reiterating that this was «absolutely incompatible» with their ideals.[69] Nevertheless, looking back at George L. Mosse's teaching, namely that «stereotypes provided both the essence of racism and [its] appeal» (Mosse 2007: VII), we must note that the Communist (and Social Proletarian) press ended up introducing new stereotypes, starting from the avoidable terminological juxtaposition between Israel and Nazi Germany. They especially re-emerged in 1982, during the Operation "Peace for Galilee", when some serious episodes of antisemitism occurred in Italy, and protests against Israeli politics also targeted the Jewish Community (Marzano, Schwarz 2013: 113–151; Tarquini 2019: 251–262).

As for the PSI, the internal debate, and even the controversies between its factions, allowed (or imposed) a less partial approach to the Middle East's problems. With great lucidity, Francesco Gozzano, for example, seemed to grasp the complexity of the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian conflict, when he underlined that it had «anomalous characteristics compared to "traditional" conflicts», because along with the dispute between sovereign countries there was a new element represented by the Palestinians. The journalist significantly added that the Palestinian struggle «[was] not even a classic war of [national] liberation, since accepting this definition would mean the denial of the State of Israel's right to existence», and «a war of extermination» would be justified. He therefore reproached the Israeli ruling class for the «refusal to recognize the existence of a Palestinian problem», claiming at the same time that the Palestinian organizations should have conquered the «right of representativeness» by reconciling the «objective to create a Palestinian homeland […] with the realistic acknowledgement of the reality represented by the existence of the State of Israel».[70]

[69] Ledda, Romano. 1968. Antisemitismo e sionismo. *L'Unità*, December 18.

[70] Gozzano, Francesco. 1970. Infantilismo politico e pace in Medio Oriente. *Avanti!*, September 13.

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Jewish Left-Wing Intellectuals in Postwar Germany: The Case of Micha Brumlik and the Israeli Palestinian Conflict Between Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism

Anna Corsten

Introduction

When talking about anti-Zionism or antisemitism in the New Left the discourse in the past five decades has often dealt with their animus against Israel that can be accompanied by antisemitic stereotypes (Urban 2004: 119–130). Infrequently, scholarly debates turned to leftist intellectuals who fought antisemitic tendencies in left-wing groups or parties. In West Germany, an influential minority of Jewish intellectuals has taken on that role since the 1970s. Micha Brumlik represents a part of these German-Jewish leftist intellectuals. With the aid of his example, this paper will show how left-wing scholars like Brumlik became important observers and critics of antisemitism in the New Left. In a first step, Brumlik's decision to

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participate in the student movement will be explained with the aid of a biographical review. Secondly, his first encounters of antisemitism in parts of the student movement will be analyzed with the example of squatting in Frankfurt. Thirdly, the foundation of the left-wing *Jüdische Gruppe* Frankfurt (Jewish group) as a reaction to the Arab-Israeli conflict will be discussed. Lastly, the positions of Brumlik and the *Jüdische Gruppe* on the conflict and the increase of antisemitism as a result of the conflict will be examined. Reconstructing Brumlik's critique of antisemitism in several left-wing groups—a critique that stemmed from an insider—shed light on problems the New Left has had in articulating their critique of Israel. In addition, their disapproval was often voiced in connection with comparisons to the Shoah, which is particularly problematic given the German history.

As a minority group, these left-wing Jewish intellectuals and their observation of the Arab-Israeli conflict, anti-Zionism and antisemitism in parts of the New Left have hardly been part of historical research. In the beginning of the 2000s, Shila Khasani researched the *Jüdische Gruppe* (Khasani 2004: 55–74; Khasani 2006: 160–177). Zarin Aschrafi is currently writing her dissertation on second-generation Jewish intellectuals in Frankfurt and their specific experience in West Germany. In contrast to this minority group, antisemitism in the German Left has been studied more broadly in the past decade (Globisch 2013; Schmidt 2010; Stein 2011; Ullrich 2013; Herf 2016). However, before analyzing Brumlik's participation in different left-wing groups it is first necessary to look at the biographical reasons for his political activism.

Brumlik's Journey from Zionism to the Student Movement

"The story which I want to tell, my story, is also a story of several losses and of continued attempts to get hold of the lost. […] But the loss was not to be replaced anywhere else and the return to the country that had taken everything from my parents was above all not able to give back anything that had been lost."(Brumlik 2000: 10).[1] With these words, Brumlik introduces us to his past and the past of his parents. After the end of World

[1] German Original: "Die Geschichte, die ich erzählen will, meine Geschichte, ist auch die Geschichte eines mehrfachen Verlustes und der fortgesetzten Versuche, des Verlorenen dennoch habhaft zu werden. […] Das Verlorene war anderswo nicht zu ersetzen, und die

War II, most Jews living in Germany were Displaced Persons (DPs) who had survived the concentration camps or fled the pogroms in Poland. They intended to emigrate to the United States or to Palestine/Israel. Staying in Germany was not an option for most survivors. Also, the World Jewish Congress (WJC) stated in 1948 that Jews should not live in Germany (Freimüller 2010: 386–407; Grossmann 2009: 138–144).

Brumlik's parents met in Switzerland in 1942 (Brumlik 2000: 13–15). They had fled Germany to Switzerland during National Socialism. Brumlik belonged to the so-called second generation. Its members were born after the Shoah. Brumlik grew up with the traumas of his parents, the conflicting feelings of Jews living in Germany after 1945 and the wish to find a place to belong to. Being born in Davos in 1947, he moved to Frankfurt in 1952. Life in the city was a shock for 5-year-old Micha Brumlik, who loved the quiet mountains of Davos. His parents, however, had never felt at home in Switzerland (Brumlik 2000: 16–18). At the age of 12, Brumlik joined the Zionist Youth in Germany (Zionistische Jugend in Deutschland, ZJD), which had been founded in 1959. As a member, he intended to emigrate to Israel after finishing school (Brumlik 2000: 31). He joined summer camps and other events of the organization. At that time, Brumlik did not show any interest in German politics, culture and society which he did not feel he belonged to. Instead he strongly identified with Israel as well as the communist ideals life in a kibbutz represented to him. In the Zionist youth, he was taught that Jews had bought land from Arab farmers legally. For him, it was unthinkable that the Israeli state committed injustice to other people (Brumlik 2000: 56 f.). He saw the soldiers of the Israeli army as heroes who had defended their land against an aggressor that did not accept the Plan of Partition proposed by the UN General Assembly. Focusing on Israel was a widespread phenomenon in Brumlik's generation. Cilly Kugelmann, who worked at the Jewish Museum in Berlin as program director between 2002 and 2017, described the attitude of the second generation towards Israel as a utopian dreamland (Kugelmann 1998: 61–71).

Encouraged by the victory of the Israeli army during the 1967 Six-Day War and after finishing his A-levels, Brumlik went to the 'Kibbutz Matzuba,' founded in 1938, where an aunt and his paternal grandparents lived. In the kibbutz, Brumlik learned Hebrew and worked in the fields.

Rückkehr in das Land, das ihnen [den Eltern] alles genommen hatte, konnte das Verlorene erst recht nicht wiederbringen.".

"This year led to the loss of my religious faith and to the insight that I was not made for living in communism. The loss of trust in Zionism sealed the year." (Brumlik 2000: 68).[2] Brumlik criticized that most of the kibbutzim could only survive due to the financial help of the state. He recognized that Arabs as well as oriental Jews working in the fields and textile industry were treated differently. The imperative of equality Israel had promised to him, based on the ideas of Theodor Herzl, was a charade. Brumlik had to overturn his life-long persuasions and restart his journey for belonging. With the help of his religion, he had tried to find the place where he fitted in, the place his parents were not able to find anymore after they had been robbed of their home. As he decided to study law at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, he made his way into politics (Brumlik 2000: 78 f.). Brumlik lived in a student house, which belonged to the social-democratic youth movement where his aversion to the settlement policies of Israel grew. This became the main reason why he decided to leave Israel. The German student movement raised his hopes that he might find a place of belonging there.

"A new life was about to begin and I was determined to leave everything behind that was connected to Judaism, Israel and Zionism and to fully engage in the student movement." (Brumlik 2000: 95).[3] By abandoning his Zionist views, Brumlik coped with his disappointment about Israel and its politics. As for other members of the second generation, like Dan Diner and Cilly Kugelmann, Israel had given him the possibility to identify with a country. These intellectuals shared the collective generational experience of disenchantment with Israeli politics (Freimüller 2010: 400–402). By returning to Frankfurt and participating in the student movement, which he had observed over the years in Israel, Brumlik attempted to find a different group he could belong to. He had held leftist views before but solely focused on them now instead of Israel. Nevertheless, Brumlik only shortly remained an active part of the student movement. Back in Frankfurt, he had first participated in meetings of the SDS but did not share their understanding of a communist revolution. Next, he joined

[2] German Original: "Das Jahr 1967/68 […] führte […] zum Verlust meines religiösen Glaubens sowie zu der Erkenntnis, daß jedenfalls ich persönlich nicht zu einem Leben im Kommunismus geschaffen bin. Der Verlust meines Vertrauens in den Zionismus besiegelte dieses Jahr."

[3] German Original: "Ein neues Leben sollte beginnen und ich war fest entschlossen, alles, was mit dem Judentum, mit Israel und dem Zionismus zusammenhing, sein zu lassen und mich mit vollen Kräften auf jene Studentenbewegung einzulassen."

meetings of the FNL where he stayed longer but dropped out since he was also not convinced of their anarchic views. In Brumlik's view, both groups were too radical in their claims. In the end, the student movement became another rather short attempt to find a place of belonging. What he found to be an important topic in the SDS and the DKP (Deutsche Kommunistische Partei) was the problem of a raising rent index in Frankfurt. In general, he shared their views on this topic but at the same he also observed their use of traditional antisemitic stereotypes in this debate, which contributed to him distancing himself from these groups.

Squatting, Fassbinder and the Fragmentation of the Frankfurter Left

In Frankfurt Westend in 1970, left-wing students, in particular from the *Frankfurter Spontiszene*, and families of *Gastarbeiter* [guest-workers] moved into unoccupied houses and squatted them for the first time in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). Prominent figures like the intellectual Daniel Cohn-Bendit and later foreign minister Joschka Fischer participated in the squatting. The housing situation in Frankfurt had changed dramatically during the previous decade due to the attractivity of the city. A number of housing spaces had been changed into offices. Tenants were driven out. Westend was hit particularly hard since many businesses moved there. Ignatz Bubis, head of the Jewish community in Frankfurt and later of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, owned several houses that had been occupied. He, as well as other Jews, was harshly criticized as investor.

Micha Brumlik, who strongly opposed the measures of these landlords, pointed at a political climate in which "antisemitism prospered" (Brumlik 2000: 116).[4] What he meant by that was that traditional antisemitic stereotypes were on the rise in leftist student groups as well as in German media covering the conflict. Jewish investors like Bubis were depicted as ruthless, exploitative characters. The Jewish community of Frankfurt received several threatening letters asking them to leave Germany and wondering "how the poor Jews got that much money" (Freimüller 2020: 417).[5] Members of the community also reported banners that were put up

[4] German original: "Daß in diesem Klimader Antisemitismus gedieht…"

[5] German original: "…wo haben die armen Jidden nur das viele Geld her? […] Sie haben doch seit geraumer Zeit ein Vaterland – von der UNO den Arabern weggenommen. Gehen Sie doch dorthin."

close to a construction area by *Revolutionärer Kampf*, an important part of the *Spontiszene*, calling Bubis and other Jewish investors usurers and rogue capitalists (Freimüller 2020: 416).

In 1973, the writer Gerhard Zwerenz published the novel *Die Erde ist unbewohnbar wie der Mond* about real estate speculation in Frankfurt. His main character, a speculator, was a Jew who justified his actions by pointing at the faith of his family during the Shoah. Writers like Martin Gregor-Dellin attacked Zwerenz for constructing an antisemitic setting in which the main actor was portrayed as criminal and monster. Still, Zwerenz work was also popular in the *Frankfurter Spontiszene* (Freimüller 2020: 424–426). Originally, the book was supposed to become a play which the screenwriter Rainer Werner Fassbinder put into action.

Traditional antisemitism also became obvious in Fassbinder's novel and play *Die Stadt, der Müll und der Tod* that was partly based on Zwerenz' book. His main character was "the rich Jew" who boosted housing prices (Freimüller 2020: 425–427). When Suhrkamp published the book in 1976, the Jewish community and others protested against it. Suhrkamp withdrew the book from bookstores. In addition, criticism was voiced in German newspapers. Joachim Fest, historian and editor of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ), accused the whole Left of antisemitism that was fueled by the Soviet attitude towards Israel (Fest 2008: 246). Other journalists, like Benjamin Heinrichs and Hellmuth Karasek, came to the defense of the Left. They pled for a nuanced view on the Left (Freimüller 2020: 428 f.).[6] The debate about the Fassbinder play came up again almost a decade later. Despite ongoing protests by the Jewish community, the *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*, the CDU, FDP and part of the SDP, the Frankfurter *Kammerspiele* had planned the premiere of the play in 1985. All tickets were sold and the play was about to start when 25 members of the Jewish community entered the stage to prevent the start of the performance. Micha Brumlik also joined the protests. The performance of the play could not start. After the Knesset and international newspapers had also voiced criticism, the *Kammerspiele* decided not to perform the play as they had planned on another date (Freimüller 2020). The Jewish community experienced professions of sympathy but also again anonymous insults calling them plague-spots (Freimüller 2020: 474). In the end of this conflict, Bubis strongly criticized what he saw as "the Frankfurter Left" for being blind to

[6] Karasek. Hellmuth. 1976. Shylock in Frankfurt. *Der Spiegel* 15, available at https://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-41279970.html (last visited 08 May 2020).

Fassbinder's antisemitism. He was convinced that their position would have been different if Fassbinder had come from a right-wing scene (Freimüller 2020: 476).

Both the Fassbinder play as well as the squatting show that traditional forms of antisemitism became visible during the 1960s and 1970s. Politicians, left-wing activists, and artists reproduced stereotypes of the exploitative Jew who had privileges only by reason of their being Jewish. Jewish investors were depicted as greedy, cold, and ruthless. Their personal backgrounds as survivors or supporters of people in need were not mentioned. Also, the role of the building authorities, which had initiated the development of rising housing prices, was not revealed. Thus, the Shoah and National Socialism were hidden in public memory and discourse. However, it was not only antisemitism in the West German society that was depicted in the squatting. Moreover, especially the Left was (often as a whole) attacked for reproducing traditional antisemitic stereotypes. For Micha Brumlik, this meant a division between German-Jewish leftist intellectuals, who welcomed the actions taken but were concerned by the stereotypes, and a non-Jewish German Left. Obviously, Brumlik, viewing the *Spontiszene* as main circulator of antisemitic slogans, did not accuse the whole non-Jewish German Left of being antisemitic as Joachim Fest did. Nevertheless, in the context of squatting he noticed a tendency to apply traditional antisemitic stereotypes that were already common by the end of the nineteenth century. To him, this came as a surprise since he thought to have found a political home where he did not encounter biases against Jews.

In consequence, Brumlik's position raises an important question: Why did certain, often more radical parts of left-wing students who fought inequality, racism and fascism, show a tendency to spread traditional antisemitic stereotypes in this political conflict? The historian Tobias Freimüller gave a short answer to that. Primarily, the leftist student groups saw investors like Bubis as speculators and not as Jews. Thus, they were oblivious to antisemitic tones in their statements (Freimüller 2020: 434). With this assumption, Freimüller hinted at a problem that needs to be specified further. The ideology of anti-capitalism provided a specific system of thought through which parts of the New Left overtook the traditional stereotype of the Jew as capitalist. Sociologist Claudia Globisch following Thomas Haury and historian Moishe Postone observed a "structural affinity between antisemitism and anti-capitalism" which these scholars called "structural antisemitism" (Globisch 2013: 46). The historical example of the squatting in Frankfurt suggests that this structural affinity can also be

found in some left-wing student groups in the early 1970s. However, this became a problem for leftist Jewish intellectuals like Brumlik who tried to draw attention to this affinity.

For these reasons, Brumlik joined the SB (*Sozialistische Büro*). Being part of this group, Brumlik tried to make people aware of both the weakness of capitalism and the problem of antisemitism in Germany. The SB tried to avoid mistakes other leftist groups had made in their view: "too much trust in a party, too little self-organization, dogmatic application of Marxist theories, nonreflective adoption of middle-class theorems, abrupt activism…" (Brumlik 2000: 124).[7] They met at *Club Voltaire*, founded in 1962, which was a meeting point for leftist students (Aschrafi 2019a: 161–179). In 1975, Brumlik was asked to join the journal *links*. Dan Diner was also a member of the team. Over the years, Brumlik had repeatedly arguments with other editors about a critical perspective on antisemitism among leftist intellectuals and activists. For example, he had suggested writing an article about antisemitism in Karl Marx's *Zur Judenfrage* [On the Jewish Question], but his idea was rejected. Most of the coeditors held the view that discussions about antisemitism in the Left would only harm their goals. During the Gulf War in 1990 and 1991, the differences between the editors resulted in the end of the journal.

The student movement and leftist groups Brumlik participated in were also not able to provide him with the home he was seeking. Although he shared many political beliefs, forms of antisemitism as apparent in the squatting or the silence he encountered when talking about the phenomenon left him feeling like an outsider. Thus, he once again shifted his focus and became more active in the *Jüdischen Studentenverband* [Jewish Student Association]. Here, he was invited to lecture and write about several aspects of Israeli/Palestinian history and its importance for Judaism (Brumlik 2000: 130–132). During these lectures he was confronted with pro-Palestinian positions that went along with comparisons between the Israeli politics towards Palestine and the Shoah. Although Brumlik was critical of Israel's treatment of Palestinians, he vehemently criticized these comparisons.

[7] German original: "zu große Parteigläubigkeit, zu geringer Wille zur Organisation, dogmatische Anwendung marxistischerTheorie, unreflektierte Übernahme bürgerlicher Theoreme, unvermittelterAktivismus…".

Anti-Imperialism, Antisemitism and the Founding of the *Jüdische Gruppe*

Supposedly, Germans see themselves as supporters of Israel, which is often stated to be necessary given its history (Brumlik 2015: 79–81). Thus, German media expressed its solidarity with Israel after the Six-Day War began in 1967. The SDS, however, did not share the euphoria. Particularly, after Israel had conquered several territories, the SDS more than ever perceived it as an imperial, racist state and ally of the United States (Schmidt 2010: 41–44; Ullrich 2006: 5567–5579; Ullrich 2013: 124). Jews were seen as capitalists and therefore as enemies of the working people. The SDS attacked Israel for being a spearhead of the United States (Aschrafi 2019b: 467–494). However, the criticism the SDS voiced towards Israel lead to the withdrawal of support from other parts of the Left, for example the German Trade Union Confederation (DGB). Meanwhile, *Club Voltaire* became a place for exchange for leftist students who wanted to support the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Although the SDS could not agree on an anti-Israeli position, close contacts between leftist students of the SDS and Fatah activists developed. Many of them drew parallels between the situation of Palestinians and Vietnam. Similar to these activists participating students declined Israel's right to exist (Aschrafi 2019b: 474–476).

The development among students in the SDS as well as the violent hostage-taking of the extreme left-wing groups Revolutionary Cells (RZ) and Red Army Faction (RAF) in Entebbe in 1976, deeply divided the Left. In consequence, Brumlik and other Jewish intellectuals like Dan Diner and Cilly Kugelmann decided to establish their own political group in 1980. They named it *Jüdische Gruppe* [Jewish Group] Frankfurt. Eventually, Brumlik, who portrayed himself as a "fanatic anti-Zionist" at that point, had met a group of left-wing students in Frankfurt who had a "Jewish sense of national identity" (Brumlik 2000: 105). The group, that parted in 1985, mainly discussed three themes: the relation to their parents and whether they shared their experience of persecution; the relation between the non-Jewish German Left and the German-Jewish Left, and the Israeli politics concerning Palestinians (Brumlik 2000: 140–142; Khasani 2006: 167). Speaking out against the Israeli oppression of Palestinians, the *Jüdische Gruppe* stood for the autonomy of an Israeli and Palestinian state. Thus, they also opposed the position of the Jewish community in Germany, which supported Israeli politics. Remaining a critic of

the Israeli politics towards Palestine Brumlik regarded Israel, just like many other leftist intellectuals, as an imperialist state. He favored a binational solution to the conflict. He criticized the Zionist politics of Israel insofar as he could not accept the way Palestinians were treated. Due to Israel's social exclusion of Palestinians, the second generation's attitude towards Israel changed in the 1970s. They were critical of Israeli politics but still perceived the country as their emotional homeland. Cilly Kugelmann concluded: "Happy is the person who forgets what cannot be changed." (Kugelmann 1998: 61–71).[8]

The Arab-Israeli conflict remained an important topic for the *Jüdische Gruppe*. Regional conflicts that involved Israel strengthened agitation against the state. Tensions towards Israel were further heightened by the UN declaring Zionism as racism in 1975 as well as by Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 (Herf 2016: 288). The invasion of Lebanon took place because the PLO had stored weapons and planned as well as conducted attacks on Israel from Lebanon. Brumlik, who criticized the invasion, also became aware of double standards that were often applied when talking about the conflict in the Middle East. From his point of view, the student groups of the New Left in West Germany were not interested in finding a solution for both sides—they neither favored a two-state nor a binational solution. Instead they declined Israel's right to exist (Rosenfeld 2018: 51–64; Globisch 2013: 45–47). In this context, the comparison between Israel and the National Socialist regime underlined to Brumlik that Germans, including parts of the New Left which had initially demanded a more nuanced debate about the past, had not done enough to face up to the committed crimes (Brumlik 2015: 118). However, the war in Lebanon divided the Left, particularly the Green Party, in those who urged for a new perspective on the Arab-Israeli conflict and those who insisted on their antizionist views (Schmidt 2010: 75).

However, the culture of debate further radicalized during the Gulf War in 1990 and 1991. Many Germans drew comparisons between the Second World War and the Gulf War. When Iraq threatened to fly bombing raids on Israel, Germans were concerned about the Iraqi people not the Israelis (Brumlik 1991: 37). However, Brumlik also saw positive effects of the Gulf War because it became clear to Israel that territorial safety would only be reached through peace or mutual nuclear deterrence between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Brumlik hoped that Israel would work on a

[8] German Original: "Glücklich ist, wer vergißt, was nicht mehr zu ändern ist."

binational solution together with the Arab states, the United States and the Palestinians. Giving the Palestinians a possibility to become re-entrenched should, according to Brumlik's estimation, go along with the recognition of the state Israel by the Arab neighbors (Brumlik 1991: 142–146). He also emphasized the responsibility of Europe that had outsourced the problem of antisemitism on the continent by supporting the building of a Jewish state in the Middle East. Thus, he perceived the nation building of Israel as the climax of European colonialism and imperialism (Brumlik 2007: 146 f.). In this regard, Brumlik criticized the Left in Germany because of its divisiveness over these issues. Still, many leftist activists were supporting a violent solution that was supposed to result in the building of a Palestinian state only. By demanding the boycott of Israeli products, these radical activists ignored their country's past as Brumlik pointed out. Other moderate left-wing protagonists supported Israel in view of Germany's history. Their support, however, did not go far enough in Brumlik eyes. "Caught up by their own history the German Left has a mess on their hands. It has nothing to say anymore to this new historical epoch." (Brumlik 1991: 158).[9] Disappointed by the attitude of many moderate Lefts, Brumlik left the Green party to which he had belonged between 1989 and 1991. He explained his decision with the fact that the Greens, on the one hand, mourned the victims of the Shoah but on the other hand they did nothing to protect Israeli citizens, probably children or relatives of the victims. The Green party had objected to supplying Israel with weapons that were supposed to be used in the defense against the Iraqi attack during the Gulf War but later revised their position (Brumlik 2000: 214 f.; Khasani 2006: 161–163). Nevertheless, Brumlik did not re-join the party.

In the debates emerging from the Arab-Israeli conflict in the past decades, scholars of antisemitism recognized difficulties in separating the issues of anti-Zionism and antisemitism. Thus, Omer Bartov and Tony Judt recently argued that anti-Zionism is often used to conceal antisemitism. Both historians therefore emphasized the need to specify the difference between both phenomena when talking about the Arab-Israeli conflict (Judt 2019: 63–72; Bartov 2019: 28–62). Anti-Zionism basically means to deny Jews the right of national self-determination in Israel/Palestine (Kloke 1994: 19; Pfahl-Traughber 2007: 49–58). This does not

[9] German original: "Von der eigenen Geschichte eingeholt, steht die deutsche Linke vor einem Scherbenhaufen. Der neuen geschichtlichen Epoche hat sie nichts mehr zu sagen."

necessarily have to be antisemitic. Scholars like Armin Pfahl-Traughber, Judt and Bartov define antisemitic anti-Zionism as connection of the radical demonization of Israel and its politics as well as the defamation of Jews. Anti-Zionism becomes antisemitic if Israel is depicted with traditional antisemitic stereotypes. For example, if Israel is labeled as being responsible for capitalism, racism, globalization and imperialism or Israel is being described as string-puller of a world conspiracy, traditional antisemitic stereotypes are applied. This is often used to deny Israel's right to exist (Pfahl-Traughber 2007: 52; Bartov 2019: 44). Frequently, Zionism is equalized with National Socialism. Of course, not every form of critique of Israel is antizionist or antisemitic. However, critique of Israel can also contain antisemitic stereotypes. Intellectuals call this specific form of antisemitic critique of Israel 'new antisemitism'. Thus, many scholars emphasize the necessity to expose antisemitic critique of Israel with the aid of certain criteria such as the use of double standards when talking about Israel and other countries or the demonization of Israel and Zionism (by the use of antisemitic stereotypes) (Kreis 2005: 17–32; Embacher 2005: 50–69).

Having belonged to different, partly radical, left-wing student groups and later the Green party, Brumlik recognized the blurry lines between a legitimate critique of Israel, anti-Zionism and antisemitism. In consequence, he and other leftist Jewish intellectuals were concerned by antisemitic stereotypes they themselves encountered when discussing the Arab-Israeli conflict. This demonstrates, again building on Globisch, Haury and Postone, that there is not only a structural affinity between anti-capitalism and antisemitism but also between anti-imperialism and antisemitism (Globisch 2013: 46). Brumlik and the *Jüdische Gruppe* observed that the denouncement of Israel as imperial state often went along with antisemitic statements in left-wing groups like the SDS. However, they also detected the frequent use of comparisons between National Socialism, the Shoah and Israeli politics when speaking about the conflict in the Middle East.

Positions of the *Jüdische Gruppe* on the Arab-Israeli Conflict and Comparisons to the Shoah

In the political discourse in West Germany during the 1970s and 1980s, Israel's treatment of the Palestinians was often compared to the Shoah. Israeli soldiers were depicted as SS men, Israel accused of treating the Palestinians as the Germans had treated them. Brumlik, who had related the massacre of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon to Babi Jar, soon came to regard these comparisons as problematic as did other members of the *Jüdische Gruppe* (Brumlik 2000: 150 f.; Brumlik 1983: 7–14). When between 762 and 3500 Palestinian refugees were massacred by Falange soldiers in September 1982, Israel was blamed. Apparently, the Israeli army, which watched the refugee camps, had done nothing to stop the murder of innocent Palestinians. Although the massacre itself was a result of the civil war in Lebanon, a conflict between Christian Lebanese and Muslim movements, the latter being supported by the PLO, Israel was stigmatized as a main aggressor in the conflict (Herf 2016: 430–433). In reaction to the invasion, the *Jüdische Gruppe* had protested against Israeli politics in Frankfurt and Bonn. In Frankfurt, Brumlik pointed out, the group made its first encounter with "antisemitic anti-Zionism" (Brumlik 2000: 146). They planned the demonstration with a group of undogmatic left-wing activists from Frankfurt as well as international student groups. Repeatedly, the *Jüdische Gruppe* was accused of lecturing the other groups in a know-it-all manner. They were, as Brumlik described, therefore told that the others would not listen to the "so called progressive Jews" (Brumlik 2000: 147). Comparisons were drawn between the situation of the Palestinians and the Jews in Nazi Germany. The Trokyist League of Germany (Trotzkistische Liga Deutschland), for example, claimed during the discussion that Palestinians were brought to concentration camps in Israel after being marked with a white cross. Brumlik recalled one of their members saying that in Auschwitz and Treblinka this would have been the Star of David (Brumlik 2000: 148).

Although these statements do not attack Jews directly with traditional antisemitic stereotypes, particularly German-speaking scholars came to regard these comparisons as 'secondary antisemitism' (German: sekundärer Antisemitismus). While Micha Brumlik as well as other members of the *Jüdische Gruppe* problematized the situation of Palestinians and the responsibility of Israel in this regard, they strongly opposed to any comparisons between the situation of the Palestinians and the Shoah in the

following years. In Brumlik's perspective, they led to a reversion of victim to perpetrator status of the Jews. This means, as Werner Bergmann and Wilhelm Heitmeyer concluded, "the accusation of anti-Semitism appears to be nothing but an instrument to brush off criticism of Israel […]. When critical attitudes towards Jews are assigned to Israeli policies, they gain a comprehensible motive and no longer appear as irrational anti-Semitic prejudice" (Bergmann & Heitmeyer 2005: 70–89). For these reasons, the *Jüdische Gruppe* brought the downplaying of the Shoah and the scandalization of Israeli politics to the attention of other political groups. This could lead to the rise of traditional and new antisemitism, they predicted (Kreis 2005: 24; Brumlik 2018a: 61–79). Thus, it became important for them to criticize Israeli politics towards Palestinians while also hinting at antisemitic statements in debates about the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Brumlik and the *Jüdische Gruppe* also observed the phenomenon of secondary antisemitism in connection with the German process of coming to terms with the past. Often, secondary antisemitism appears in the trivialization of the Shoah or in Germans/Austrians blaming Jews for the Shoah and its consequences. For example, the comparison between the genocide of the Jews and the German victims of the bomb war, which right-wingers call "*Bombenholocaust*," is a form of secondary antisemitism (Bergmann & Rainer 1991: 231–236; Bergmann 2016). In so doing, they reject dealing with the past.[10] In addition, a majority of Germans believes that Jews exploit the memory of the Shoah in order to get advantages.[11] The psychoanalyst Zvi Rix described this phenomenon with the following statement: "The Germans will never forgive the Jews that Auschwitz happened." (Broder 2006: 158).[12] As both activists and intellectuals Brumlik and the *Jüdische Gruppe* perceived it as their task to draw attention to different forms of antisemitism.

Particularly, Brumlik's participation in the *Jüdische Gruppe* showed his quest for belonging—belonging to a political leftist group other than the student groups of what he called the 'non-Jewish German Left', to Judaism but not to the Jewish community in Germany, and to a country in which his parents could not feel at home anymore.

[10] Bergmann and Erb. *Antisemitismus in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 257–262.

[11] Gessler, Philipp. Sekundärer Antisemitismus, available at https://www.bpb.de/politik/extremismus/antisemitismus/37962/sekundaerer-antisemitismus?p=all (last visited 22 April 2020).

[12] German original: "Die Deutschen werden den Juden Auschwitz nie verzeihen."

"On the Move Is the Finest Place to Live":[13] The Unique Experience of the Second Generation of Leftist German Jews

Identifying with a certain country they had lived in was difficult, almost impossible, for members of the *Jüdische Gruppe*. As with Brumlik, their childhood experiences in Germany intensified the relation to Israel. Many members of the *Jüdische Gruppe*, like Brumlik and Diner, developed a counter-identity focusing on the political system of the Soviet Union as well as on the state of Israel (Diner 1980: 57–70; Brumlik 1986: 172–176; Speier 1986: 182–194). Nevertheless, they also experienced the problem of Zionism in Israeli politics. Many of them opposed the violence and expulsion of Palestinians and thus left Israel in order to return to Germany. While looking for a group to participate in, they joined different leftist groups and supported the student movement. However, they also came into conflict with these groups because they did not show interest in the problem of antisemitism. With growing tensions in the Middle East, Brumlik and members of the *Jüdische Gruppe* often encountered critical positions towards Israel that entailed antisemitic stereotypes among left-wing student groups such as the SB and SDS. In an autobiographical essay, Diner states that as a child he felt the need to decide between a German or Israeli identity. Today, he knows that these two parts of his identity are interwoven (Diner 1980: 70). Cilly Kugelmann concludes that the members of her generation have found their home in the "Everywhere and nowhere" (Kugelmann 1998: 71).[14]

Living as the child of survivors in Germany raised the question of how to deal with the traumatic experiences of their parents, which initially they did not talk about. It also posed the problem of how to participate in the society that had persecuted relatives and friends and that had only dealt with its past in a limited way. Due to the encounter of antisemitism in German society and different political groups, the second generation organized themselves as a political as well as religious minority group, positioning themselves against social inequality, antisemitism, and the Israeli treatment of Palestinians. While being politically active first as Zionist and later as leftist activist and anti-Zionist, Micha Brumlik and many others of his generation experienced different forms of antisemitism.

[13] Kugelmann 1998: 71. German Original: "Überall und Nirgendwo."
[14] German Original: "Überall und Nirgendwo."

They were exposed to traditional antisemitism in encounters with other German activists, colleagues, and teachers. In addition, they observed the rise of secondary and new antisemitism while the memory of the Shoah was hardly existent and the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis deepened. As a consequence, they problematized a structural affinity between antisemitism, anti-imperialism and anti-capitalism which in some cases had provided certain groups with a system of thought that made them receptive for antisemitic arguments.

The positions of Brumlik and the *Jüdische Gruppe* provide a significant example for articulating criticism of Israeli politics and Zionism without the use of antisemitic stereotypes. Today, Brumlik sees the state building Zionism as a legitimate reaction to prevailing nationalism in the nineteenth and twentieth century.[15] However, he observes the politics of Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu with great concern because Netanyahu refuses any attempts on a two-state solution (Brumlik 2015: 12 f.). Brumlik has realized that a binational solution to the conflict is not possible and thus supports a two-state-solution. The scholar does not regard himself as an anti-Zionist anymore. The different forms of antisemitism he observed throughout his life convinced him of the importance of a Jewish state. Instead he portrays himself as a post-Zionist who argues for the need of a new definition of Zionism and for a new answer to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Brumlik 2018b: 371–384). Thus, he also emphasizes the necessity to overcome the increasing shift between Jews living in the diaspora and Jews living in Israel. In 2016, 56% of the global Jewish population did not live in Israel (Brumlik 2015: 39). Many diaspora Jews are critical of Israel's treatment of the Palestinians and its understanding of Zionism. Particularly, its settlement policies in the West Bank are met with resistance. This is also the reason why Brumlik decided against a life in Israel. His view of Zionism does not allow the discrimination of another people. In the end, the second generation of Jews living in Germany after 1945 is destined to remain in the in-between or nowhere just like their parents were. Due to the prevailing antisemitism in Germany, which can be found in different parts of society, as well as the nationalist Zionism of Israel, they cannot find a place of belonging.

[15] Brumlik, Micha & Butler, Judith. '"Gehört der Zionismus zum Judentum?" Micha Brumlik im Gespräch mit Judith Butler, 27.09.2012', available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VsTlsWZId7s&t=70s (last visited 02 April 2020).

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The French Radical Left and the Jews: The Influence of the Arab-Israeli Conflict on Anti-Zionism Within the French Radical Left Between 1967 and the Early 1980s

Thomas Maineult

Introduction

The paper analyses the anti-Zionist activism of the French radical Left through the demonstrations and violence that were perpetrated by the extreme Left in France in the 1960s and 1970s. Trotskyist and Maoist movements, such as the *Ligue Communiste* and the *Gauche Prolétarienne*, played an important role on the redefinition of the figure of the Jews in the Left in France. The Arab-Israeli conflict helped them build the image of Israeli soldiers and the State of Israel as an enemy to be fought both in the Middle East and on French soil. Such a representation of Israel and the Jews was shared by another part of the French Left in the 1960s and 1970s, the Christian Left, close to the newspaper *Témoignage Chrétien*

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and the "second left" like the PSU (*Parti Socialiste Unifié*). These groups took the side of the Palestinians, and portrayed them as martyrs of the Jews. The Christian Left also supported anti-Zionist actions, and Zionism was perceived as a new form of colonialism (following the seminal article of French orientalist Maxime Rodinson "Israël, fait colonial?" published in 1967).

In the first half of the twentieth century, and until the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, Zionism shared common features with Socialism, but in the 1960s it became an ideology that a part of the French Left fought, especially from 1967 and the Six-Day War. Anti-Zionism became a slogan and a cause for mobilization within the French Left from the 1960s onwards. The redefinition of Zionism as an imperialist and colonialist ideology led to a change in the vision of the Jews shared by the Left in France.

The far Left was directly concerned with such a reappraisal. Evolving apart from the traditional Left represented by the Socialists and Communists, the far Left was strongly influenced by Trotskyism and Maoism in the 1960s and 1970s. The Arab-Israeli conflict helped it develop a rhetoric of sympathy and solidarity with Arabs and Palestinians. Thus, the condemnation of the Israeli government, and the existence of the State of Israel itself, became a common ground for the different political movements that emerged on the far Left at the end of the 1960s. Such organizations, like the Maoist *Gauche Prolétarienne* and the Trotskyist *Ligue Communiste*, were the most influential groups within the far Left, and redefined a vision of Zionism and of the Jews that had repercussions within the whole French Left. The mobilization in favor of the Palestinian cause entailed the creation of structures, often associations, to gather round a cause considered as a just cause.

Far-Left groups and movements at the forefront of the support for the Palestinians were often led by militants who belonged to Jewish families and who were Jews themselves. The complexity of the relation between these militants' Jewish identities and their political commitment against Zionism and Israel is at the core of this study, which is based on a wide range of archival material. Moreover, the debate about Zionism in France was also opened by intellectuals who were Jewish, like Maxime Rodinson. The terms of the debate strongly influenced how Palestinians were depicted on French media throughout the 1970s, when solidarity with the Palestinians was at its heyday in France. The Christian Left also played a part in redefining the figure of the Jews after the Second Vatican Council.

Although the Jews were not depicted as assassins of the Christ any longer, Palestinians were nevertheless seen as victims of a State that promoted Zionism. Therefore, the question about the potential links between anti-Zionism and antisemitism must be dealt with.

The Far Left and the Palestinian Cause in France

The Palestinian cause found a lot of support in the French Marxist-Leninist Left of the post-1968 era. Maoist and Trotskyist movements echoed the Palestinian cause because supporting it was another way of denouncing imperialism. According to a classic Marxist analysis, Israel was a bridgehead of American imperialism in the Middle East, and had to be fought. The Maoist *Gauche Prolétarienne* (GP), and the Trotskyist *Ligue Communiste* (LC) were in the vanguard of the support for the Palestinians. The study of their respective newspapers, one Maoist (*La Cause du Peuple*) and one Trotskyist (*Rouge*), shows the deep commitment of these organizations to the Palestinian cause. *La Cause du Peuple* highlighted the role played by Yasser Arafat and Palestinian *fedayeen*. Covers of the newspaper often showed a freedom fighter with an assault rifle wearing a *keffiyeh*, with a clear subtitle: "With the *fedayeen*, you will resist".[1] Alain Geismar, a famous figure of the student movement of May 1968, and a GP leader, was even compared to Yasser Arafat in an article entitled "Geismar-Arafat".[2] The GP was strongly convinced of the necessity of having a figure that could lead the armed struggle against imperialism. Both Geismar (in France) and Arafat (in Palestine) embodied that. While Yasser Arafat was the epitome of the Palestinian cause for French Maoists, the Trotskyists of the LC were more interested in theoretical debates about the nature of the Palestinian struggle. The Trotskyist newspaper insisted on the socialist nature of the Palestinian cause. First and foremost, they believed that what was going on was a colonial fight between an oppressed people and an imperialist state, supported by the United States. The Palestinian revolution aimed at the creation of a socialist Palestinian state and, instead of focusing on the figure of the Palestinian leader as the Maoists did, Trotskyists preferred to deal with internal debates between the different factions within the PLO. Therefore, *Rouge* let organizations other than Yasser Arafat's Fatah express themselves in its columns. For instance,

[1] 1970. Avec le fedayin tu résisteras. *La Cause du Peuple*, 28.
[2] 1970. Geismar-Arafat. *La Cause du Peuple*, 29: 8.

George Habash's PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine) and Nayef Hawatmeh's DFLP (Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine) saw their communiqués and political programs published in the Trotskyist newspaper. When the program of the PFLP was published, the newspaper explained that "contrary to other branches of the Palestinian resistance, PFLP believes in the socialist revolution, refuses to be subordinate to another Arab state, and rejects any compromise with the bourgeoisie" (Baron 2003: 102–103).

The admiration of the far Left for the Palestinian cause can also be explained with the similarities between its activists and Palestinian fighters. Both French and Palestinian leaders were highly educated and skilled individuals. The founding members of Fatah held university degrees, and in 1968 "the military management of Fatah includes engineers, mathematicians, and senior executives who did not choose a career path in the army" (Baron 2003: 103). French Maoist and Trotskyist activists shared these features with Palestinian fighters. Trotskyist representatives like Benny Lévy, Daniel Bensaïd and Henri Weber were philosophers, whereas Maoist leaders like Alain Geismar or Jean-Pierre Le Dantec were engineers. Moreover, French far-Left leaders belonged to the same generation as the Palestinian fighters. Statistics show that "the average age of the 300 *fedayeen* of Fatah who died during combat in 1968 was 24 years and 6 months old, and 25% of them were born after 1948".[3] The average age of the leaders of the GP and LC in France in 1968 was 25. There was a generational proximity between these two groups, which accentuated the idea of sharing a common cause and consequently facilitated French support. They also had similar goals: rallying masses, workers, and youth to make a revolution against an authoritarian state, the state of Israel for Palestinians and the French state for French activists.

However, the support for the Palestinian cause found its limits within the far Left after the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich. Strongly influenced by Benny Lévy, one of its leaders, the GP disapproved of the use of violence against Israeli athletes (Hirsch 2017: 141). Disagreements appeared among Maoists on the nature of the struggle. Maoists became more and more reluctant to the use of violence, and condemned the Munich terrorist attack, thus creating a gap between the leaders of the GP and the workers who supported the GP, who were often Arabs. Olivier Rolin, member of the GP and founder of its armed branch, the *Nouvelle Résistance*

[3] 1969. Plate-forme du FPLP. *Rouge*, 12: 14.

Populaire (NRP), recalled this situation and explained that "the decision to not systematically support Palestinian terrorism was not an easy choice for us, when you consider that most of our supporters were of Arab descent, particularly receptive to these themes, and not very attentive to the methods that we used" (Furet et al. 1985: 212–213). The transformation of the Palestinian cause and the dissolution of the GP in 1972–1973 were concomitant. The LC insisted on the necessity of an armed struggle, and denounced Fatah and Yasser Arafat to be responsible for the defeat of Palestinian groups against the military forces of King Hussein of Jordan in September 1970.[4] Maoists and Trotskyists had different ways of understanding and supporting the Palestinian cause. As the GP disappeared, the LC went through various transformations, including a name change, (*Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire*). The unresolved question remained of how to support the Palestinian cause when far-Left organizations had weakened, and had shifted their focus on national issues.

The connection between Maoist activists and migrant workers are central to understand the survival of the Palestinian cause in France. The GP had developed connections with migrant workers who had been abandoned by traditional trade unions, opening up the opportunity for the GP to a substitute proletariat won over to their cause. Arab workers saw an opportunity too. They preferred the GP to the LC because "they were not very receptive to the Trotskyist line about a socialist Palestine, whereas migrant workers saw the Palestinian cause as a national and anti-colonial cause" (Hajjat 2006: 80). An article entitled "Geismar-Arafat", published in *La Cause du Peuple*, is almost exclusively dedicated to a gathering of migrant workers and Maoists who met to watch a film about Palestine, only to be dispersed by the police. Showing a film was a way of politicizing migrant workers as well as distributing leaflets written in Arabic. The massacres of September 1970[5] also saw the migrant workers of the Renault factories near Paris mobilize. One of them stated that they knew "that it was our brothers who died there. We knew their fight was ours. It is them who help us hold our head high in the Renault factories, and who make us fight stronger against the pace of production, against our wretched salary,

[4] 1972. Lenoir. Michel. La trêve rompue. *Rouge*, 170: 2.

[5] In September 1970, King Hussein of Jordan decided to eliminate Palestinian movements in Jordan. It led to the massacres known as "Black September," and caused a huge resentment within Palestinian armed forces.

and the bullying of our racist bosses".[6] This internalization of the Palestinian cause means that Arab workers were guided by the events that took place in Palestine and in the Middle East more generally. For instance, when Nasser died in September 1970, migrant workers of the Renault factories decided to go on strike. Between 1970 and 1972, the *Comités Palestine* mobilized migrant workers and became a real political force, trying to create a parallel society by assisting Arabs in terms of literacy and health problems. They were autonomous entities created by former activists of the GP, as both organizations shared the same goal: "to know if the explosive potential of the Arab world can be channeled towards the unification of the growing revolts of migrant workers in French factories" (Hajjat 2006: 81). However, the *Comités Palestine* faced a wave of anti-Arab racism and police forces also tried to intimidate its members. Finally, after the death of a 15-year-old Algerian boy in Paris in 1971, the *Comités Palestine* organized a campaign against racism, alongside famous intellectuals as Jean-Paul Sartre, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. This was the last campaign of the *Comités Palestine* which afterwards dissolved.

French Society and the Palestinian Cause

At the turning of the 1970s, the support for the Palestinian cause found an echo in various associations and movements, which tried to connect politics to French society. One of them was created by former Maoist activists, and played a central role in the mobilization of migrant workers throughout the 1970s. For instance, the *Mouvement des Travailleurs Arabes* (MTA) was created by former members of the *Comités Palestine*. One of its leaders, Said Bouziri, was a former Maoist and pro-Palestinian activist who risked expulsion from France by the Ministry of the Interior. The French government had decided in 1972 to take measures to make conditions to get a residence permit stricter for migrant workers, therefore many of them risked deportation from France. In October 1972, Said Bouziri decided to go on hunger strike to protest against this decision. He was supported by the same group of intellectuals that had mobilized in 1971, and who declared themselves to be "responsible for the maintenance of Said Bouziri and his wife on French soil" (Crettiez & Sommier 2002: 304). Said's brother Hamza had suffered the same fate a year

[6] 1970. Geismar-Arafat. *La Cause du Peuple*, 29: 8.

before, and explained that he had been arrested because he was an Arab, and a supporter of the Palestinian cause. The creation of support committees was a new way of going into politics, and through this example one can see how the Palestinian cause turned into a new cause supported by migrant workers. Supporting the Palestinian cause, and supporting the cause of Arab workers went hand in hand for the MTA. The actions of the MTA opened the way to a series of other actions led by associations that promoted the rights of migrant workers. For instance, Said Bouziri stood up for the rights of undocumented workers in the 1970s and early 1980s (Siméant 1998). The creation of the MTA questioned the idea of a transformation of formal politics into a more informal way of politicization, through the emergence of new social movements in the 1970s.

As France was facing an economic downturn with rising unemployment, far-left ideologies and traditional communism became less attractive to the working classes, especially the Arab working class. The French Socialist Party (PS) was trying to become the first party of the Left, and to outdistance the French Communist Party (PCF). A way to reach such a goal was to mobilize the working class and, more particularly Arab workers around several themes. The PS thus took the migrant workers' question into account in its programs for the 1981 election. Jean Le Garrec, a member of the PS, supported the idea of a complete equality of rights between migrant workers and French workers, especially the right for migrant workers to create associations (Wihtol de Wenden & Leveau 2007: 37), which was granted after François Mitterrand's election. This opened a new era of social mobilizations in favor of immigrants with the "*marche des Beurs*" in 1983, and the creation in 1985 of the famous slogan "*Touche pas à mon pote*" by the association SOS Racisme, in which Julien Dray and Harlem Désir—a member and a future member of the PS—played an important role.

François Mitterrand's commitment to immigrants is also linked to his support to the Palestinian cause. The socialist leader remained a traditional ally of Israel, but became aware of the necessity of taking the Palestinian cause into account. After his visit to Israel and Gaza in 1972, and his meeting with Yasser Arafat in 1974, François Mitterrand clearly took the side of the Palestinians, claiming recognition of their rights to a state in 1976. He grew deeply concerned about the fate of the Palestinian leader, and helped protect Yasser Arafat in August 1982 and December 1983 when he was evacuated from Beirut and Tripoli (Filiu 2005). International politics and national issues were in fact intertwined. Moreover, French socialists

built networks with other Socialists and Palestinians in international arenas such as the International Socialist (SI).

The study of the role of the PS and of François Mitterrand shows how the governing French Left handled the concerns of a part of the French population. The transformations of French society in the late 1970s and 1980s are central to this study, and the political role played by immigrants is thus made evident. The rise of the *Front National* (FN) and of racism led to a campaign of anti-racism in which immigrants played a significant role (Gordon 2012). The PS understood how these immigrants could be a potential electorate, and based its policy on their needs. A new way of doing politics emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, based on various associations promoting their own opinions on the Palestinian cause. The Palestinian cause evolved from a classic theme of international solidarity and support for oppressed people, to a mobilization of social groups like migrant workers living in France. The debate on Palestine became a quintessentially French debate that spoke of French problems and questioned the essence of French society. Therefore, the study of the Palestinian cause in France raises other questions about the place of immigrants within French society, the fact that they live in suburbs (*banlieues*), and the rise of religious issues.

Another closely related evidence of the role of associations in the mobilization for the Palestinian cause is the creation of ASFA (*Association de Solidarité Franco-Arabe*), in 1967 by former Gaullist minister Louis Terrenoire, with the aim of finding a common ground on which to solve the Palestinian question. The association was not exclusively dedicated to promoting the Palestinian cause, as it was also concerned with the fate of Arab populations in Maghreb and in the Middle East in general. However, the Palestinian cause created consensus among members of the association,[7] which gathered intellectuals, journalists, and politicians. Georges Montaron, director of the Christian Left newspaper *Témoignage Chrétien*, was a member of the bureau of the association, and an important pro-Palestinian activist. In various articles published in his newspaper, the suffering of the Palestinian people is often compared to the suffering of the Christ. In an editorial published in December 1969, Georges Montaron states: "Jesus Christ is, with the poor, a Palestinian refugee" (Hecker 2012: 39–46). He was also an organizer of the first *Conférence Mondiale*

[7] Montaron, Georges. 1969. Jésus-Christ: un réfugié palestinien. *Témoignage Chrétien*, December, 18.

des Chrétiens pour la Palestine that took place in Beirut in May 1970 (Hecker 2012: 47). Christians, either Gaullist or more on the left of the political spectrum, were strong supporters of the Palestinians. The essence of Christianity was at stake in the Middle East, where this religion claimed to be born. The analysis of such a network of relationships is central in the study of the support for the Palestinian cause by French Christians. Many activists of the Christian Left often belonged to a generation that had fought in the Resistance during World War II, and because of this, a lot of their analyses about the Middle East and the Arab-Israeli conflict relied on terms that refer to this period, like comparing the SS and the Israeli army. For instance, in Jean-Luc Godard's film *Ici et ailleurs* (1974) where Golda Meir and other Israeli officials are compared to Nazi figures. Violent anti-Zionism was used to denounce what was seen as a new form of colonialism. Georges Montaron, Claude Bourdet, and pastor Etienne Mathiot who defended strongly the Palestinian cause, were also very active during the 1950s and early 1960s against the Algerian war. However, being a Resistance fighter during World War II or a supporter of the independence of Algeria during the Algerian war did not necessarily mean a strong commitment to the Palestinian cause. A lot of former Resistance fighters and supporters of Algerians were in favor of Israel and not the Palestinians. Nonetheless, militants of the Christian Left did not hesitate to reactivate their networks when it was time to take sides with the Palestinians. Most of the PSU (*Parti Socialiste Unifié*), the party of the "Second Left" that was created out of the rupture with traditional socialism in regard to the Algerian war, denounced Zionism and supported Palestinians.

The Palestinian cause was an important source of mobilization for various groups in the 1970s and 1980s, with the media, especially television playing a role in heightening it. The debate about the Arab-Israeli conflict and about Zionism was impassioned, and most of the time defendants of the Palestinian cause accused the French media of censuring them.

The Impossible Debate About Zionism and the Arab-Israeli Conflict in France

Proponents of anti-Zionism often regret that their position was not reflected in the French media. Most of the time they were seen as covert antisemites because of their anti-Zionist discourse. A few months before the Six-Day War, Jean-Paul Sartre dedicated an issue of his review *Les*

Temps Modernes to the Arab-Israeli situation (Dreyfus 2011: 52). The issue was divided in two parts. The first part included texts from authors defending Zionism and Israel, and the second gathered texts from Arab writers who defended the Palestinians. Maxime Rodinson, Professor at the *Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes*, published in it a seminal article that would have a large impact on French intellectuals and on public opinion. The article, entitled "*Israel, fait colonial?*", denounced Zionism as a new form of colonialism. However, Rodinson tried not to take sides with any of the camps (pro-Israel or pro-Arab). His position could be qualified as a-Zionist. What Rodinson strongly affirmed is the necessity to deconstruct the Zionist discourse, and to condemn the attitude of the State of Israel, but he clearly drew a line between anti-Zionism and antisemitism. Being a member of a Jewish family that had fled pogroms in Tsarist Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century, Rodinson perfectly knew that anti-semitism is to be fought by any means. Therefore, he claimed, fighting antisemitism can go hand in hand with fighting Zionism.

Rodinson's position was not mainstream in the French media. Palestinians were quite absent from French television screens during the Six-Day War. For instance, in June 1967, an episode of the famous TV show *Les Dossiers de l'écran* discussed the conflict in the Middle East, with the first part investigating the diffusion of Otto Preminger's film *Exodus*, and the second hosting a debate between Israelis and Arabs. However, no Palestinians were invited to speak. The debate became impossible when the Arabs left the stage, refusing to talk further with their opponents. In the 1970s things began to change, when Yasser Arafat became the figure-head of the Palestinian cause. He knew how to use the media to mobilize Western public opinions in favor of his cause. Indeed, the image of the Palestinian conveyed by French TV evolved according to the geopolitical context.

After the Six-Day War, Palestinians were only shown as refugees in television reports. Images of displaced populations fleeing bombings became commonplace when television news dealt with the issue Palestine. Children and elderly people were often portrayed wandering in refugee camps and living in utter poverty.[8] Showing Palestinians as victims of the conflict made French viewers empathize with them, as their emotion and compassion were aroused and encouraged to mobilize for this cause (Boltanski 1993). However, Palestinians were also in need of a political

[8] For instance, see *Cinq colonnes à la une*, 7 July 1967.

representation, and through the 1970s they tried to get rid of a negative image that portrayed them either as poor refugees or as violent terrorists.

French public opinion discovered a new image of the Palestinians at the beginning of the 1970s when the armed struggle intensified after Yasser Arafat had been elected leader of the PLO. The dominant image that emerged on French screens was that of a Palestinian fighter, armed with an assault rifle, and wearing a *keffiyeh*. The *keffiyeh* is one of the many symbols representing the Palestinian cause, and Arafat wore it on the cover of *Time Magazine* in December 1968. Thus, the *Fedayeen* became the symbol of the Palestinian cause.

The fight of the Palestinians was not only an armed struggle against hostile armies, but they also carried out terrorist attack internationally. Palestinian terrorism had an important media-friendly effect on French public opinion. As a series of hijackings took place at the beginning of the 1970s, planes emptied of their passengers and destroyed with explosives were shown on French television, In September 1970 for instance, flights from TWA, Pan Am and Swiss Air were hijacked and destroyed on an airfield in Jordan. This phenomenon was not unprecedented, but it was on the rise with the actions of Palestinian commandos, and it contributed to the exposure of the Palestinian cause (Ferragu 2014: 265).

Moreover, the fact that Palestinian terrorism occurred on European soil, made European public opinion take the Palestinian cause into consideration. When a commando of Palestinian terrorists took eleven Israeli athletes hostages in September 1972 during the Munich Olympic games, all television cameras remained focused on the balcony of the building in which the athletes were detained. The famous image showing a Palestinian terrorist leaning out of the balcony to check if the way is clear was on all TV screens around the world. The power of such image established the Palestinian terrorists as actors on the international stage, and had an impact on French public opinion. At the end of 1972, the *Première chaîne de l'ORTF* (first channel of French television) transmitted a special program dedicated to the ten most important events of the year. André Fontaine, a famous *Le Monde* journalist, commented on what happened in September 1972 in Munich in terms that underlined the terrorist aspect of the Palestinian struggle. He insisted on the "much talked about Palestinian organization" to describe the Black September Organization, which was responsible for the death of the Israeli athletes.[9] Fontaine described them

[9] *Du sang sur les Jeux*, édition spéciale, 1ère chaîne, 26 December 1972.

as "a group of Palestinian extremists who promised to avenge the terrible massacre of Palestinians that took place in September 1970, committed not by Israeli troops but by Jordanian royal troops",[10] thus adding to the level of confusion of the viewers. Consequently, the Palestinian struggle was discredited, as it appeared to lack consistency. The commentary was apocalyptic and hopeless, and the cause was only presented as an armed struggle evolving into in a spiral of violence and blood.

France was also the theatre of the fight between Israel and the Palestinians because the Palestinian representative of the PLO in France, Mahmoud Al Hamchari, was victim of a bombing of his home in Paris in December 1972 and died a month later from the injuries. French television reported the event by giving the idea that French authorities were worried that Paris "which was considered as a no man's land in the Middle East conflict, could become the hunting ground of Israeli and Arab secret services".[11] The Palestinian cause managed to capture public opinion's attention through many grand gestures, but at the same time, as it began to be covered by the media, Palestinians still seemed to be in search of political visibility rather than military conflict, and more and more of them were interviewed by French journalists.

Indeed, most commentaries on the Munich events insisted on the unawareness of the French media about the nature of the Black September Organization. Commentators asked themselves "What is the Black September Organization? Is it an organized group or just a name that is used when a terrorist attack is claimed? No Palestinian can answer this question. No organization approves or condemns the actions of the Black September organization. But all of them can give an explanation about these actions".[12] French television insisted on the image of terrorists but provided little space of discussion about the Palestinian cause. When the spokesman of the PLO Kamahl Nasser was interviewed, French viewers could see that Palestinians were torn between the justification of terrorist attacks, and the need to reach political respectability. The spokesman of the PLO tried to explain: "There is no such group called Black September within the PLO. We can still understand what Black September is. It is the logical result of the massacres of September 1970. Black September is a state of mind among Palestinians. They have been dispossessed for twenty

[10] Ibidem.
[11] *JT 20 heures*, 2ème chaîne, 19 March 1973.
[12] Ibidem.

years. The world did not listen to their complaints. They lived in caves, tents, in the worst conditions a human being can live. They made an appeal to the United Nations. They asked the whole world to understand their cause, to give them their rights and homes back. But nobody listened to them. It is normal to find such a phenomenon [terrorism] among Palestinians. They asked the whole world to understand them, it did not, and this is the answer: Black September".[13] Kamahl Nasser was one of the very few Palestinian personalities to be interviewed by French television channels at the beginning of the 1970s.

This raises the question of the presence, or better, absence, of Palestinians on screens in the 1970s. In December 1971, the television program *Les dossiers de l'écran* dedicated another debate to the conflict, entitled "Arabs and Israelis face to face".[14] As for the 1967 program, no Palestinian was invited. A Lebanese priest, a Lebanese sociologist, a Tunisian journalist, a Tunisian economist and an Egyptian journalist were invited, but no Palestinian. The fate of the Palestinians seemed to be in the hands of the regional great powers. The fact that Israeli representatives refused to talk directly and without intermediaries to Palestinians is also obvious. When questioned about this refusal by two journalists—Jean-Pierre Elkabbach, presenter of the show *Actuel 2*, and Josette Alia, journalist at *Le Nouvel Observateur*—the Israeli Ambassador to France Asher Ben Nathan was clear: "For us, the interlocutors are first and foremost the Arab states that we fought in 1967", adding "so far, I do not know which Palestinians can speak in the name of the Palestinians. Certainly not Yasser Arafat".[15] The Yom Kippur War in October 1973 eclipsed the Palestinian cause on French television. As a journalist put it in a debate about the war: "When there is no war, we can talk about the Palestinians. When there is a war, states make it and Palestinians are marginalized".[16] It is in 1974 that the Palestinian cause made a comeback on French screens, thanks to Arafat.

In November 1974, Yasser Arafat delivered a speech at the United Nations that marked a new step towards the political normalization of the PLO. A month before the speech, French television showed an interview of Arafat by Dominique Baudis, a journalist working for the *Première chaîne de l'ORTF*. Since the leader of PLO had just met the French

[13] Ibidem.
[14] *Les dossiers de l'écran*, 8 December 1971.
[15] *Actuel 2*, 30 April 1973.
[16] *Actuel 2*, 22 October 1973.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Jean Sauvagnargues, the journalist asked him what conclusions he had drawn from this meeting. Arafat expressed his satisfaction about the meeting in glowing terms: "I consider this meeting as the crowning moment of the Franco-Palestinian relations. Such relations were formed between General de Gaulle and me in the middle of 1970 when I was in Amman. In fact, these relations extend the cultural ties between the French people and the Arab nation, and will further extend the ties that we will create in the future. On the other hand, we highly appreciate the attitude and the vote of France in favor of our people in the debate about the Palestinian problem at the United Nations. This vote reveals the sympathetic feelings of the French government when faced with the problems in the Middle East, because it is indeed about the Palestinian problem and not about a few disputed square kilometers".[17] With such an interview, Yasser Arafat made a good impression on French journalists, who praised the "non-communist Che Guevara of the Middle East", as an anchorman called him on the day of the speech to the United Nations.[18] The journalist highlighted the fact that Yasser Arafat was received at the General Assembly under a "thunderous applause".[19] The figure of Arafat gradually became the figurehead of the Palestinian cause, as more and more programs made reference to him when discussing the topic. Symbols are also very important, and clothing was part of the process of identification to the Palestinian cause. Commentators noticed the way the leader of the PLO was dressed, "wearing a light-gray suit and his *keffiyeh*, the Palestinian national headdress".[20] Clothing became an emblem of nationalization of the Palestinian cause, since Palestinians did not have their own nation to live in. The words used by journalists to describe the situation in Palestine reveal elements of a developing collective unconscious, in particular around the idea that claiming a nation for the Palestinian people was a just cause. Through media analysis, the growing importance of the Palestinian cause on French television can be highlighted. However, French television did not exclusively focus on the figure of Yasser Arafat, but also gave the floor to Palestinian civilians, who described the conditions in which they were living. For instance, Gaullist journalist Michel Tauriac reported from Palestinian camps in the summer

[17] *JT 20 heures*, 1ère chaîne, 22 October 1974.
[18] *JT 20 heures*, 1ère chaîne, 13 November 1974.
[19] Ibidem.
[20] Ibidem.

1974, and met a woman who was both a seamstress, and a freedom fighter. The camera followed her going to the sewing shop with an assault rifle on her shoulder.[21] Everyday life in a Palestinian camp was thus described in the most prosaic way. Another Palestinian was interviewed by the French journalist, a primary school teacher teaching his pupils how to count. What is striking in this scene is that he does not teach it in Arabic, but in French,[22] something that greatly captured the French imagination. Through such reports, the intention of French television appears more distinctly. There was a will to make French viewers feel empathy for the Palestinian cause. In fact, Palestinians grew closer to French people than what was intended by the media, and such cultural proximity favored a process of identification to the Palestinian cause. If you want to rally as many people as possible to support a cause, this cause should appear to be just, and the people for whom you mobilize should appear close to you or likeable. Viewers should then feel emotion, compassion and empathy for them, thus favoring a total commitment for the cause.

As French television transmitted more and more programs dealing with the Palestinian cause, things became more confused in the 1970s, when the war in Lebanon took space in the news. Palestinians appeared divided between various factions with their own goals. For instance, Nayef Hawatmeh, leader of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), still believed in "the intensification and the spread of the armed struggle and the mobilization of masses against Zionist occupation".[23] Fractures within the PLO between Marxists who did not want to give up the armed struggle, and supporters of the more diplomatic and political Yasser Arafat became manifest. Moreover, the meeting between Arafat, Colonel Gaddafi, and King Hussein of Jordan in 1978 created even more confusion in the minds of viewers, who remembered the violent fights between Jordan and the Palestinians in September 1970. This shift can be explained with the changes within the network of alliances between Arab countries. With the Sinai Interim Agreement in 1975, and the Camp David Accords in 1978, Egypt began to work alone with Israel, marginalizing other countries and actors. All these tensions confused the understanding of the Palestinian issue, blurring it for the French public. Enemies turned into allies, and vice versa, contributing to the competition between

[21] *Au rendez-vous des grands reporters*, 1ère chaîne, 13 September 1974.
[22] Ibidem.
[23] *JA2 20 heures*, 2ème chaîne, 2 September 1975.

factions inside the PLO, and causing ruptures between the leader of the PLO and its grassroots.

The study of French television in the 1970s reveals how this decade was very important for the emergence of the Palestinian cause. The major role played by journalists to bring to the screens a new image of the Palestinian people must be underlined. Images of Palestinians transmitted by French television conveyed a mental construction of the Palestinian cause. The cause was idealized and mythologized through archetypal images and figures. However, the 1980s shed a new light on the Arab-Israeli conflict. As terrorist attacks occurred against Jewish people and Jewish locations in 1980 and 1982, the Arab-Israeli conflict was seen as the reason. Palestinians were denounced as responsible for the attacks, and the resurgence of a strong Jewish identity among activists on the Left occurred when anti-semitism suddenly reappeared in France. The debate continued to be impassioned throughout the 1980s.

In conclusion, the Palestinian cause was a source of mobilization for far Left activists in France between the 1960s and 1970s. These militants participated to the redefinition of the figure of the Jews in the French debate, and anti-Zionism gained ground throughout the period. Considered as the struggle of oppressed people against Israeli imperialist forces, the Palestinian cause evolved into a typically French debate on racism and immigration. Seen as an example of a traditional movement of solidarity with the Third World, the Palestinian cause questioned the identity of protagonists and appealed to everybody's sensibility. The biographical study of activists of the radical Left helps us understand political commitment. The fight for the Palestinian cause is seen as the continuation of anti-colonialism. The terms of the debate about the Arab-Israeli conflict were set during this period and are still shaping the debate nowadays.

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The Italian Radical Left and the Arab-Israeli Question (1969–1977)

Gregorio Sorgonà

This chapter will reconstruct how the Arab-Israeli question has been portrayed on the pages of newspapers and magazines of the Italian radical left between 1969 and 1977. In the 1970s, the Italian Radical left coincided with the extra-parliamentary left, operating and existing outside of the representative institutions of the State. Of the groups comprising it, this paper is primarily concerned with Lotta Continua (Continuous Struggle), Potere Operaio (Workers' Power), and il Manifesto. These radical groups owned newspapers of their same name: *il manifesto* (issued monthly until 1969, and printed daily since 28 April 1971); *Lotta continua* (issued weekly from 1 November 1969, then daily from 11 April 1972); and *Potere operaio* (founded in 1967, and active primarily between 1969 and 1972, with irregular publishing).

The essay will look into how left-wing extra-parliamentary groups, discussing about the Arab-Israeli question, interpreted international relations, the Palestinian self-determination movement, Zionism, and antisemitism. On the basis of this discussion, the paper's conclusions will

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attempt to identify some of the features characterising the political culture of the Italian extra-parliamentary left.

The theoretical roots of Lotta Continua and Potere Operaio can be traced to workerism (*operaismo*), a current of Italian Marxism that developed in the 1960s to break away from Marxian interpretations deriving from Hegel and Gramsci (Capuzzo, Mezzadra 2012: 44). Workerism's goal was to bring back to the fore the conflict between workers and capital, rather than moderate it and institutionalise it like, according to the workerists, the Italian Communist Party (PCI) was doing. The writings of Marx that particularly inspired these currents were the first book of Capital, and the *Grundrisse* (Forlenza, Thomassen 2016: 221). Their *livre de chevet* was *Operai e capitale* (*Workers and Capital*) by Mario Tronti (Tronti 1966) who, together with Antonio Negri, is the most influential interpreter of Italian workerism. Negri was also one of the leaders of Potere Operaio. Il Manifesto had instead been founded by members of the PCI, mostly intellectuals, who were expelled from the party in 1969 for their pro-Chinese ideas, and who shared with workerists the conviction that the *Grundrisse* were central to Marx's interpretation.

These groups, born in 1969, had a short life span: Potere Operaio dissolved in 1973, Il Manifesto in 1974, and Lotta Continua in 1976. In 1973 the groups split between those who chose to take up armed struggle (especially into Potere Operaio), and those who wanted to institutionalise their struggle (Lotta Continua and Il Manifesto) (Bobbio, 1979: 109). That same year broke out the Yom Kippur War and, in the second half of the 1970s, the Arab-Israeli question became fairly irrelevant in the debates of the Italian Radical left (Marzano 2016: 29–36), while after 1977, a year marked by great political unrest, the central idea that the conflict between workers and capital was at the core of the revolution came into question.

Two Imperialisms

The groups belonging to the extra-parliamentary left thought of international politics as a conflict between imperialism and anti-imperialism, with the former coinciding with the USSR and the USA, and the latter being symbolised by China. They accused the USSR of expansionism, and of having lost its socialist character. In 1967, *Potere operaio*, discussing certain commercial agreements between the USSR and FIAT Automobiles, accused the Soviets of wanting to carry out «a large economic reform, based on labour reorganization, and on the reintroduction of the capitalist

notion of profit».[1] China, instead, was staying «true to communist principles»[2] both in terms of international politics, and for giving centrality to the working class within the Party.[3] Even before founding *il manifesto*, PCI's intellectuals and politicians, such as Luigi Pintor, Rossana Rossanda, Lucio Magri and Luciana Castellina, questioned the doctrine of peaceful coexistence of USSR and USA, and spoke in pro-Chinese terms at the PCI's 11th Congress in January 1966 (Sorgonà 2011: 202–21). The extra-parliamentary left also saw the rise of the détente policy between USSR and USA, started during the Nixon administration, as another unacceptable compromise; therefore, they applauded China for breaking away from the imperialist equilibrium that USA and USSR had reached.

The term imperialism had a double meaning for these groups. It was both an expansionistic ideology stemming out of the needs of the capitalist market, and a politics of oppression that prevented peoples from gaining self-governance (as in the case of Czechoslovakia), or even recognition (as per the Vietnamese and the Palestinians). For *il manifesto*, the USSR was guilty of both types of imperialism, since it oppressed the nations of Eastern Europe, whilst also being organised economically around state capitalism. The subjugated peoples of the world were instead seen as the heart of the anti-imperialist struggle, and as potential revolutionary forces that could obstruct the mechanisms of capitalism institutionalised by détente. They were the new antagonists of empires, and a "people's war" was seen as the new face of the revolution. The idea of a "people's war" was drawn from Maoism, which united a liberation war with a class struggle that moved from the periphery towards the centres of power.

In the case of *il manifesto*, if the Chinese Long March was the prototype of revolutionary insurgences, Vietnam was seen as «the highest moment of anti-imperialist struggle»,[4] since there the conflict between imperialist power and oppressed nation was particularly evident. The same can be said for the Palestinians, also seen as the victims of détente, a policy that Middle Eastern local powers like the Arab nations and Israel supported (Brillanti 2013: 14). According to *il manifesto*, the «American-Soviet» peace is accomplished to the disadvantage of the

[1] 1967. L'Unione sovietica la Fiat e gli operai. *Potere operaio*, March, 8. All translations of quotes from Italian newspapers and magazines are the author's.

[2] 1967. A proposito della rivoluzione culturale cinese. *Potere operaio*, March, 30.

[3] 1968. Ancora sulla rivoluzione culturale cinese. *Potere operaio*, September, 6.

[4] Pintor, Luigi. 1970. Normalizzazione globale. *Il manifesto*, 3–4: 6–8.

Palestinians, «who are granted only little improvements to their refugee status», and the large Middle-Eastern powers (Egypt and Israel) are but appendixes to their global counterparts (respectively USSR and USA). The perspective on international politics is based on a pyramid-like construct. On the top we can find the two superpowers, with the Soviets beneath the Americans, and below them the local powers, amongst which Israel is the most independent since it can «count in the United States on the powerful Jewish community that can influence Washington's decisions».[5] In this view, China leads the anti-imperialist front even in the Middle East, because it upholds the «right of the Arab people to "take up arms" and reclaim the territories occupied by Israel».[6]

Lotta continua shared a similar stance. The USA, the USSR, Israel, and the Arab nations pursued peace in the Middle East by attempting to eliminate the «dangerous contradiction that is the Palestinian struggle».[7] As a consequence, international conflicts are the «prerogative of the great powers». Also, for *Lotta continua*, Israel's position is unique in comparison to the Arab nations, and even if the country is but a «bastion of American imperialism»,[8] Israel has its own contradictions, split as it is between a militarist and a political wing, respectively led by Moshe Dayan and Golda Meir.

The Yom Kippur War intensified these points of view. Both *Lotta continua* and *il manifesto* thought the conflict to be sparked by an Israeli aggression,[9] only to later admit that in fact it had been the Arab nations that had attacked first. Nonetheless, the papers claimed that the attack on Israel was known to the other foreign powers involved,[10] thus equating the war to a game of diplomacy, as the real reasons for the conflict were seen as less important than the underlying intentions. According to the newspapers, the Soviet Union and the United States pushed the Arabs to begin hostilities in order to contain the economic and political expansion

[5] 1971. Dietro Egitto e Israele i "grandi" manovrano per creare un sistema di stati satelliti. *Il manifesto*, April 18. See Luigi Pintor. 1971, Il commesso americano. *Il manifesto*, May 8.

[6] 1971. La politica aggressiva di Israele e gli intrighi delle superpotenze nel M.O. denunciati dal delegato cinese all'Onu. *Il manifesto*, December 10.

[7] 1972. L'olimpiade continua. *Lotta continua*, September 6.

[8] 1972. Il gioco delle grandi potenze e la "pedina" palestinese. *Lotta continua*, September 6.

[9] 1973. Guerra nel Medio Oriente. *Il manifesto*, October 7; 1973. Medio oriente. Si combatte dovunque. *Lotta continua*, October 7.

[10] 1973. La guerra e il gioco. *Il manifesto*, October 9; 1973. La quarta guerra araboisraeliana. *Lotta continua*, October 12.

of Israel. The two superpowers were in fact interested in the «complete economic assimilation» of the Middle East in «the global international market»,[11] as it was written in *Potere operaio*. The only variable in this process is Israel, because of its autonomy in regards to the «game»[12] of international politics, but the Yom Kippur War, wrote *il manifesto* only a few days after the end of the conflict, is but a «well thought-out strategy» based on «a preliminary agreement, however explicit or not, between Americans and Egyptians».[13] According to *il manifesto*, the war displayed how the détente was only a way to deceive the local revolutionary forces, and in particular the Palestinians. On 27 October 1973, Luciana Castellina published on *il manifesto* an article entitled «On the Shoulders of the People»,[14] while on the same day, *Lotta continua* wrote that the détente weighs «on the shoulders of the peoples of the world».[15] Karol Kewes Karol's *il manifesto*'s international politics expert, the son of a Russian Jew migrated to Poland after the Russian Revolution, called the two powers "robber barons" associating them to «the robber barons of the growing capitalism of the United States»,[16] a memorable image that nicely sums up how the three extra-parliamentary viewed international politics.

Self-Determination and Socialism

Claiming that peoples fighting empires are the first line against imperialism apparently implies attaching revolutionary functions to actors regardless of their social positioning. A people is composed by individuals from different social classes united not just by economic interests, but also by shared historical and symbolical claims. At a first glance, *il manifesto* seems to pay attention to this theme. In July and August 1970, the newspaper published an interview with Black Panther member Eldridge Cleaver, who was at the time in exile in Algiers. He was a critic of the Communist Party USA because «it did not address the issue of ethnicity».[17] The socialist nature of peoples is given for granted by *il manifesto*, just like it is given for granted that Arabs are intrinsically revolutionary and anti-capitalist. In

[11] 1973. Una guerra contro i proletari. *Potere operaio*, November 5.
[12] 1973. La guerra e il gioco. *Il manifesto*, October 9.
[13] Castellina, Luciana. 1973. La chiave del miracolo di Kissinger. *Il manifesto*, November 10.
[14] Castellina, Luciana. 1973. Alle spalle dei popoli. *Il manifesto*, October 27.
[15] 1973. *Lotta continua*, October 27.
[16] K. S. Karol. 1973. Il tempo dei «robber barons». *Il manifesto*, November 23.
[17] Cleaver, Eldrige. 1970. Pantere nere e classe. *Il manifesto*, 7–8: 49–53.

September 1970, the newspaper published its "Project for Communism", which stated that there is an «anti-imperialist struggle» in the Middle East, that «goes beyond nationalism, to embrace revolutionary stances that will disrupt the order of the Arab nations».[18] In the following months, these claims were further developed, and an Arab revolution was considered likely, thanks to the «quick spreading […] of a Marxist culture», «deeply secular», that «in the Arab world had never, until now, reached beyond the small circles of intellectuals». Unlike their peoples, the Arab governments are «petit bourgeois» and that is why they are against «the employment of a people's war in the fight against imperialism». Even if Marxism's «traditional interpretative patterns» cannot be applied to Arab societies, self-determination is still a matter of class. If the Arab proletariat is anti-imperialist, its bourgeoisie is «*compradora*» and dependent on foreign economic interests (Amin 1971: 71). This view of the Middle East reflects the ideological stance of *il manifesto*, and the type of sources that the newspaper reached out to, in particular Marxist Palestinians militants. This led the newspaper to stress the revolutionary disposition of the Arab peoples. In a March 1973 reportage, for instance, Luciana Castellina wrote that the Arabs shared a «strong sentiment of being all part of a single nation», and that the Palestinians are «at the forefront of a conflict» against Israel, which is in turn depicted as an instrument of «the imperialist robbery of the resources of the Middle East».[19]

Lotta continua paid some attention to the clashes within the Palestinian community, but it also described the Middle East in purely economic terms. At the heart of the Palestinian self-determination movement, the newspaper wrote, there was a «tangle of forces, spanning from inter-class nationalism and racism», «to an anti-imperialist and socialist perspective».[20] This long-term division was reflected in the clash between revolutionary factions (the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine), and para-fascist groups (al-Fatah). On this backdrop, the «armed war of the people» of the Palestinians was seen as another example of the «warfare between the oppressed and exploited people of the Middle East, and imperialists of

[18] Progetto di tesi per il comunismo (1970). *Il manifesto*, n. 9: 14–16.

[19] Castellina, Luciana. 1973. Il ruolo del movimento palestinese nel mondo arabo e come garantirgli una direzione rivoluzionaria. *Il manifesto*, March 14.

[20] 1972. L'olimpiade continua. *Lotta continua*, September 6.

any heritage, language, or religion».[21] *Potere operaio*'s ideas were similar. It saw the Palestinians as a threat to the Arab bourgeoisie,[22] scared as this was of an implosion of the «structure that controls the workforce, that is to say of the Arab and Middle-eastern proletariat». Arafat, «the *enfant terrible* of the Arab centrism»,[23] also wished to avoid this revolutionary process. The extra-parliamentary left, therefore, offered a description of Arab bourgeoisie as authoritarian, proto-fascist, and eager to repress communists.[24] *Il manifesto* was the only voice that did not consider Arafat aware of this structure of exploitation.

If the Palestinian cause is an example of socialist revolution, then, for the radical left, the Palestinians should not compromise by accepting a state via political talk:[25] their right to a nation was directly linked to the end of Israel and the birth of a bi-national state. For example, the concessions planned in the Rogers Plan were interpreted by *il manifesto* as «charity»,[26] and agreeing to them would have meant the end of the Palestinian revolution.[27]

The parliamentary left's positions were greatly different on these matters. In May 1973, the PCI and the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) organised in Bologna the Peace and Justice in the Middle East Conference, in which they requested the retreat of Israeli troops from the territories occupied after the Six-Day War. The journalist from *il manifesto* covering the event, Roberto Livi, criticised the choice to recognised Israel's «established borders» because it legitimised «the main endeavour of Zionism: the colonial theft of Palestine, and the massacre and displacement of its legitimate inhabitants».[28] In the middle of the Yom Kippur War, on 31 October 1973, Luciana Castellina, on the pages of *il manifesto*, labelled the

[21] 1973. Ancora sul Medio oriente. *Lotta continua*, October 14.

[22] 1969. Libano: dalla reazione nazionale alla rivoluzione araba. *Potere operaio*, October 30.

[23] 1971. Medio oriente. Non devono perdere!. *Potere operaio*, April 17.

[24] 1971. Rivoluzione comunista e sistema mondiale. *Potere operaio*, September 25; 1971. Profilo di Gheddafi. *Potere operaio*, September 25.

[25] 1972. La resistenza condanna il tradimento di Hussein ma le manovre per un accordo con Israele sono già iniziate. *Il manifesto*, March 19. See also: 1972. I fedayn intervengono in Cisgiordania per impedire la truffa elettorale e l'accordo fra Hussein e Israele. *Il manifesto*, March 25.

[26] 1971. Più facile per Rogers l'accordo con l'Egitto che con il governo israeliano. *Il manifesto*, May 6.

[27] Castellina, Luciana. 1970. La guerra di popolo dei feddayn. *Il manifesto*, 10–11: 25–38.

[28] Livi, Roberto. 1973. Realismo e irrealismo nel M.O. *Il manifesto*, May 18.

hypothesis of a «Palestinian micro state» as the objective of a «small bourgeois elite»,[29] adding that if the Arab nations were to recognise Israel, they would have validated «the presence of a Zionist state in the Middle East, its racist nature, its expansionist ambitions, and its support role of colonialism and neo-colonialism in the both the Middle-East and Africa».[30] Similar issues can be found in *Potere operaio* and *Lotta continua*, where every proposition to create a small Palestinian state was appraised as a threat.[31] Only after the Yom Kippur War, *Lotta continua* changed attitude, contending that the Palestinians cannot «refuse diplomatic endeavour, or the mini-state» because that «would lead […] to a dangerous and unsustainable isolation».[32] This turn might be the sign of a division within the group, but the anonymity of the newspaper's authors prevents us from analysing deeper this anomaly.

Anti-Zionism and Antisemitism

According to *il manifesto*, Israel was not a legitimate nation, having its roots in colonialism, whilst Zionism was but the ideological front for this colonial vocation. *Lotta continua*, instead, used the word Zionism a little less. In a few occasions, the newspaper attempted to distinguish between two Zionist currents: an aggressive and militarist one, and a moderate and diplomacy-oriented one, with the latter being mostly interested in Israel's economic expansion.[33] Nonetheless, the use of the category remains very generic, associating it both to fascism and to imperialism. Unlike the other two newspapers, *Potere operaio* never used the term Zionism, nor it considered the presence of Jews in Palestine as colonial. Rather than condemning the process that brought Israel to life, it criticised its political aims. Additionally, for *Potere operaio*, there was no big difference between

[29] Castellina, Luciana. 1973. Per la resistenza la posta in gioco è la salvaguardia del processo rivoluzionario nel mondo arabo. *Il manifesto*, October 31.

[30] Castellina, Luciana. 1973. La resistenza palestinese ancora indecisa se accettare la proposta sovietica di partecipare alla conferenza di pace. *Il manifesto*, October 31.

[31] 1971. Eccole le borghesie nazionali!. *Potere operaio*, August 1; 1973. La quarta guerra araboisraeliana. *Lotta continua*, October 12.

[32] 1973. La conferenza di Ginevra. *Lotta continua*, December 20.

[33] 1972. Israele irrompe nel Libano. *Lotta continua*, September 9.

Israel and the other regional powers, since both Israel and the Arab nations were in the hands of bourgeois governments exploiting the proletariat.[34]

Il manifesto, therefore, is the newspaper that dwelled the most on Zionism, employing and embracing the perspectives of the Israeli radical left on the topic. In the Spring/Summer issue of 1971, the newspaper published an article written by three Israeli revolutionary militants that had been previously printed by the "New Left Review." The article's account of Zionism would be used by *il manifesto* many times over the following years. According to it, Zionism is a cohesive political phenomenon, aiming at eliminating class conflict in Israeli society, in the face of an external enemy. This ideological super-structure can hold together parties that have little in common, like Herut, Mapai, Mapam and most of the new Israeli left, excluding Matzpen, a revolutionary anti-Zionist party, hostile to pan-Arabism and to Stalinism, and therefore in line with the ideas of *il manifesto*. The article also holds that the migration of poverty-stricken Jews from Asia and Africa to Israel will lead to a revolutionary movement,[35] something that the other groups of the extra-parliamentary left also believed.

A long article on the historical origins of Zionism was published in September 1972. The main source for this article had been *Storia del Sionismo* by Nathan Weinstock, published in Italy in 1970 (Weinstock 1970).[36] In the article, and in the book, the birth of Zionism can be traced back to the attraction that colonialism «had on the European bourgeoisie», with its aims and objectives being in line with those of global capitalism. The article insists on the support that «Baron Edmond de Rothschild, a great French Jewish banker» granted towards the establishment of the first Jewish settlements in Palestine, by «acquiring the first land plots and providing the initial capital for colonisation». The Palestinian Jews, originally just a few thousands, in comparison to 500,000 Arabs (Morris 2001: 14–15), «quickly became planters, pretty much like the French in Algeria, or the British in Rhodesia».[37] The great migration of Jews in the early twentieth century did not improve the situation for the Arabs, but the

[34] 1972. Contro "l'unità nell'interesse nazionale", offensiva di classe e lotta armata rivoluzionaria. *Potere operaio*, September 25; 1972. "L'arabo errante", ivi, November 12.

[35] Manegbi, H., Machover, M. and Orr, A. 1971. Struttura di classe di Israele. Sionismo e lotta di classe. *Il manifesto*, 3–4: 57–66.

[36] 1973. Der Yassin e il progetto sionista. Lettera di Anna Minerbi Belgrado. *Il manifesto*, April 29.

[37] 1972. Lo Stato d'Israele. *Il manifesto*, September 14.

article does not address one of the main causes for this migration, that is to say the failed Russian Revolution of 1905. Additionally, it omits that these newcomers promoted an idea of a Jewish nation that was incompatible with Rothschild's colonial settlement model (Schindler 2013: 17), and it only briefly mentions the leftist character of the migration. Rather, *il manifesto* underlined how the Jewish penetration in Palestine was only possible thanks to international financial support, that transformed the uprooted Jews into bourgeois, and the Palestinians into working class. The clash between Jews and Palestinians grew and exploded in «an extremely long strike, lasting from 1933 to 1936» and in a «farmers' guerrilla which was repressed in bloodshed in 1939».[38] The social conflict between Jews and Palestinians was in fact one of the causes that led to the political confrontation. But it is far from true that this confrontation was between proletariat and bourgeoisie, or between the workers and capital, if anything between workers and workers. The 1930s migrations, the outcome of the antisemitic wave that shook Europe, and the United States restriction of access, influenced the job market, and the Histradrut, the main Jewish union, began to pick workers according to ethnicity (Morris 2001: 159). The historical reconstruction on *il manifesto* overlooked the numbers of the Jewish migration to Palestine, which increased the Jewish population from 84,000 by 1922, and to 484,000 by 1942, two thirds of which resided in urban areas (Bensoussan 2009: 12–13). Additionally, the influx of Jewish refugees after the war is attributed, in the article, to the restrictive immigration policies of Western countries, and to «the Jewish lobby […] in America, that asked, with the support of many political figures, the creation of a Jewish state».[39] The words "Jewish lobby" was also used by the newspaper in another occasion, when referring to the amendment of the *Trade Act*, which helped Russian Jews to expatriate to Israel more easily. Paradoxically, in the article, whilst employing an antisemitic stereotype ("Jewish lobby"), *il manifesto* also accuses the USSR of antisemitism.[40]

Reflections on antisemitism are absent in the thought of the radical left. They do not appear on *Potere operaio*, and are extremely limited on *il manifesto* and *Lotta continua*. The antisemitism that the papers address is confined to the present. In the case of *il manifesto*, condemnation of

[38] 1972. Lo Stato d'Israele. *Il manifesto*, September 14.
[39] 1972. Lo Stato d'Israele. *Il manifesto*, September 14.
[40] 1973. Ebrei contro cereali. *Il manifesto*, April 25.

antisemitism was primarily a way to criticise Soviet communism. In the spring of 1971, Rossana Rossanda, referring to a trial taking place in the USSR to a group of Jewish hijackers, wrote that «the seriousness of the sentences» can be traced back to Soviet antisemitism, «a sore and burning point» because «the Jews are the most persecuted minority» in the USSR. Antisemitism is «threaded in the history of the authoritarian degeneration» of the Soviet Union, because the Jews, according to Rossanda, had been at the centre of the Bolshevik revolution; therefore, Soviet antisemitism justified the pro-Chinese stance of *il manifesto*. «A few years ago», Rossanda claimed in the article's conclusion, «the Polish ambassador to China, during an official dinner, having drank a little bit more than it was advisable, told an antisemitic joke. The day after he was packing and being sent home. So be it».[41]

Lotta continua saw antisemitism as a partial anomaly within the mechanism of capitalist exploitation. The magazine admitted that the discrimination against the Jews had hit equally the wealthy and the working class, a reality that was difficult to accept for the deeply class-oriented ideological vision of the group. But the newspaper resolved this contradiction by arguing that antisemitism forced the Jews to construct a fictional identity, and forced the working class Jews to ally themselves with the bourgeois Jews. «The fact that we are still talking about "Jews"» highlights that «there is still a collective identity of "Jews", bourgeois and proletarian alike». «The imperialist regime has unleashed its class violence against the Jews, not only with Fascism and Nazism, irrespective of class. The Jew was its enemy and victim, not just the working class Jew».[42] If antisemitism disappeared, so would the Jewish identity.

These quotes display a lack of sensitivity towards Jewish persecutions, and for identities undefined by class belonging. They also reveal how the extra-parliamentary left thought of history as a long continuity of political phenomena and social systems. The use of false analogies demonstrates this, especially in the cases of *il manifesto* and *Lotta continua*.

In one of its first issues, *il manifesto* claimed that in Czechoslovakia, after the repression of the Prague Spring, a replica of the «non-aggression pact between USSR and Germany» was put in place, whilst «the possibility of a war with China» would be «similar to Hitler's aggression to the

[41] Rossanda, Rossana. 1971. Dirottano, e inoltre sono ebrei. *Il manifesto*, May 23.
[42] 1972. L'infamia antisemita. *Lotta continua*, September 10.

East».[43] On 24 June 1972, it spoke of «final solution» to define the American bombings of Vietnam.[44] Another example of false analogy is the use of terms that identify the Nazi persecution of Jews to describe Israeli politics towards the Palestinians (Di Figlia 2012: 88). After the Munich massacre of 1972, and the decry of the genocidal nature of Israeli politics, to justify the non-conventional acts of war that the Palestinians undertook outside of the Middle-East, *il manifesto* wrote: «Israel's language is similar to that of those who used to send them to concentration camps: final solution for the Jews, final solution for the Palestinians»,[45] and on 17 October 1972, the newspaper titled: «Israel wants a "final solution" for the Palestinian issue».[46] The wording, confusing concentration and extermination camps/final solution might also reveal a limited understanding of the mechanisms of the Holocaust. In *Lotta continua*, a false parallelism that thinks of fascism as a still alive ideology was common. Not a single protagonist of Middle-Eastern politics escaped this categorisation: the «nationalist Arab groups» are led by «para-fascists leaders like Sadat and Gheddafi»; Arafat is expression of a «para-fascist nationalism» and Israel has an ongoing «fascist occupation»[47] of Palestine. «Zionist fascism» is yet another type of fascism adding to the already existing ones, like «Jordan feudal fascism» and «the military and bourgeois fascism of the Arab states».[48]

Violence and the Right to Legitimisation

The Palestinians' right to use violence was never questioned by the extra-parliamentary left, more concerned as it was with the usefulness of this violence as an instrument for a people's war. For *il manifesto*, an act of violence, including terrorism, is legitimate, if it did not target civilians, and if it had a political agenda. The most striking case was the hijacking of Boeing 707 en route to Lod, on 9 May 1972. For the newspaper the killing of civilians was unacceptable, but the aim of the hijackers, who were

[43] Pintor, Luigi. 1970. Normalizzazione globale. *Il manifesto*, 3–4: 7.

[44] 1972. La "soluzione finale" americana per il Vietnam già sperimentata sei anni fa per il Laos. *Il manifesto*, June 24.

[45] 1972. I nemici degli ebrei. *Il manifesto*, September 10.

[46] 1972. Israele cerca la "soluzione finale" del problema palestinese. Nuove incursioni in Libano e in Siria. *Il manifesto*, October 17.

[47] 1972. L'olimpiade continua. *Lotta continua*, September 6.

[48] 1972. La cronaca del massacro. *Lotta continua*, September 7.

asking for an exchange of political prisoners, was deemed right.[49] Violence is approved if effective, but not all the extra-parliamentary groups agreed on what "effective" meant. For instance, in the case of the Munich massacre, *Lotta continua* condemned the attack, whilst *il manifesto* justified it (Di Figlia 2012: 86). But why such a difference? For *il manifesto*, the attack had a political reason, once again a prisoner exchange, athletes for political detainees,[50] and since the athletes were representatives of Israel, they were not considered civilians. For *Lotta continua*, instead, the action had to be condemned, but for political reasons rather than ethical ones. It was an act of desperation,[51] and therefore it is not compatible with a revolutionary war, with a "people's war".[52] However, both newspapers offered a description of the massacre that did not hold accountable the members of the commando. The Israeli athletes, wrote *il manifesto*, had been «most likely shot by the German snipers».[53] *Lotta continua* first claimed that «some of the hostages died under the fire of the automatic weapons of the German "marksmen" […], whilst others in the explosion of the helicopter caused by the *fedayeens*»,[54] and then, two days later, it added, inaccurately, that the helicopter had been hit by «a cannon shot coming from a police armoured tank».[55]

il manifesto's position on the Munich massacre sparked a tense debate, and the newspaper even mentioned the angry reactions of its Jewish readers: «some of them even came by our headquarters, disappointed, bitter, insulting». This controversy tells a lot of how the newspaper, and in general the extra-parliamentary left, perceived the Jewish identity. In this occasion, the newsroom explicitly admitted to not understanding the need for recognition of the Jews: «what surprised us was the need to shout: "I am a Jew"», and the expression of a «national and religious dimension that is foreign to us». The comment to these letters states that a revolutionist,

[49] 1972. I guerriglieri di "Settembre nero" caduti nell'impresa del dirottamento aereo. *Il manifesto*, May 10.

[50] 1972. Commando palestinese sequestra la squadra israeliana a Monaco e chiede il rilascio di 200 prigionieri arabi. Due morti. Interrotte le Olimpiadi. Il governo di Tel Aviv rifiuta la trattativa. *Il manifesto*, September 6.

[51] 1972. L'olimpiade continua. *Lotta continua*, September 6.

[52] 1972. I balletti dell'opportunismo. *Lotta continua*, September 8.

[53] Castellina, Luciana. 1972. Quando si era ormai raggiunto l'accordo di trasportare tutti al Cairo, i tedeschi organizzano l'eccidio. *Il manifesto*, September 7.

[54] 1972. La cronaca del massacro. *Lotta continua*, September 7.

[55] 1972. Perché gli ostaggi dovevano morire. *Lotta continua*, September 9.

when faced with the problem of recognising a nationality or a religion, «does not experience any». The only reason why these protests were given space, the newspaper wrote, is the «debt» that «humanity» has «towards the Jews». From this it can be deduced that the acknowledgement of national identities is seen only as legitimate for insurgent subjectivities like Palestinians and Vietnamese, rather than the Jews. This difference is explained as follows. Israel is not a legitimate nation because its international function has made it «a state like *all others in the West*», «and like for the others, its wrongfulness has to be accountable».[56] This reasoning is misleading, since the legitimacy of the other Western states is not doubted, even if they operate in the same way as Israel. To sum up, the extra-parliamentary saw the Jewish community as a unique entity, but their right to recognition was circumscribed only to the debt that humanity has towards the victims of the Holocaust, while the Jewish identity was regarded as fictional since class belonging is the criteria that extra-parliamentary groups used to define social actors.

Conclusions

The Italian extra-parliamentary left had, inevitably, a superficial knowledge of international politics. An observatory on international politics implied costs that the extra-parliamentary groups could not sustain, and consequently they mostly relied on their international networks to gain information. Additionally, international politics was for them a canvas on which to paint and re-paint their own ideals, organised around a binary principle: the world is made up of oppressors and oppressed, and that is why categories such as "Third World" are useless.[57] This dualism can also be applied to the radical left's vision of Italian politics, as the extra-parliamentary groups refused pluralism to interpret contemporary societies as the opposition between two poles. If in internal politics the clash is between the workers and capital, in international politics the conflict is between peoples and empires. At the core of this world vision towers the certainty that capitalism has a totalitarian aspiration that reaches out to both social and international relations. The working class is the force fighting capitalism, and the Palestinian militant is but a projection of the Italian

[56] 1972. I nemici degli ebrei. *Il manifesto*, September 10.
[57] 1970. Lotta di classe contro l'imperialismo. *Potere operaio*, June 13.

worker. The self-determination of the former is imagined in the likes of the emancipation of the latter.

The situation in the Middle East is but a translation of Italian politics (Di Figlia 2012: 86). This view leads to many linguistic mishaps, amongst which shines the issue around the word "Zionism". *Lotta continua* presented Zionism as a form of fascism, whilst *il manifesto* considered it a colonising phenomenon. Of these two perspectives, the second is the one that has influenced the most the Italian public opinion on Israel. The closest thing to Zionism, as it is interpreted by *il manifesto* is the Israel's nationalist right, whose ascent to power was the outcome of «a great fracture in the history of Zionism» caused by the Six-Day War (Bensoussan 2009: 143–6). In fact, after the conflict, the Israeli army increased its participation in public life, which eventually drove Mapai into disarray, and, ten years later, to its first electoral defeat (Schindler 2013: 3 *et passim*). However, the Italian radical left rarely looked diachronically at the growth of Israel's nationalist right after 1967,[58] because it considered Zionism the driving ideology of all Israeli political parties. There was an evident tendency towards ideological reductionism. Zionism was displayed as a homogenous political phenomenon, when in reality it has many different internal currents that are sometimes even incompatible. The equivalence between Zionism and colonialism is based on a reconstruction of Israel's history based on plenty of omissions. There are no references to the existence of Jewish settlements in Palestine before the twentieth century, nor to those established after 1905, and even the hostility that always surrounded the Jewish community in the Middle East prior to the birth of Israel is overlooked. Israel is always depicted as a state that acts without suffering losses itself, even if at the time thousands of Israelis had already perished in war contexts (Schindler 2013: 2). The articles that this research has analysed never mentioned the aversion of the Arab nations towards the ONU Resolution 181/1947, and the hypothesis to constitute two states, one of which would cover 55% of Palestine, and inhabited by 500,000 Jews, and 400,000 Arabs (Morris 2001: 237). Even when talking about ethnic discrimination, the picture painted is only partial. Whilst the newspapers stressed Israel's guilt, and racism against the Jews in the USSR, they do not mention the discrimination that the Jewish community had to endure in the Arab countries after 1948. This is surprising, if we consider that in both Egypt and Iraq the Jews targeted were in many cases

[58] 1973. Una guerra contro i proletari. *Potere operaio*, November 5.

communists. These omissions might be due simply to a lack of awareness of the facts, but they are functional to an anti-Israeli historical reconstruction.

A type of sociological reductionism that regarded the poorest sections of Israeli society as revolutionary guided understandings and predictions about Israeli society in pretty much all magazines and newspapers researched. This perspective did not take into account how religious and cultural factors might shape identities. The prediction of these newspapers has in fact been upturned by history, and those parts of Israeli society that were supposed to be revolutionary went in fact to fatten up the ranks of the nationalist right (Schindler 2013: 9 *et passim*).

One of the central matters of *The Jewish Question* of Marx is left unresolved by the extra-parliamentary left: in a socialist society, what are the spaces for collective subjectivities that cannot be reduced to class? Marx's approach to the Jewish question is both a criticism to the assimilation of the Jewish community to Western culture, as well as an invitation to Jews and other subjects to join a world in which every man is free from exploitation, property, and religion (Marx 1976: 181–182). In the Second International, such emancipatory projection had a strong deterministic character (Traverso 2018: XV, 2 *et passim*), focussed on the working class, and the European revolution. World War I and the Bolshevik revolution marked the failure of this Euro-centric utopia, but the economic Marxism of the Second International persisted through the Third International, even though there surely were political and theoretical perspectives that went past such a rigid classism, like in the case of Italian communism.

In this regard, Enzo Traverso stated that, apart from a few exceptions, Italian communism was incapable of taking into account «national, racial, religious or sexual» (Traverso 2018: 212) forms of oppression. If we apply this to the Marxist left in Italy, then it is truer for the *new left*, term used to identify the extra-parliamentary left, than for to the PCI, since the extra-parliamentary left conserved many aspects of both the Second and the Third International. Lenin's definition of antisemitism as a feudal left-over, and at the same time a scapegoat for capitalism exploitation (Traverso 2018: 85–89) was offered in exactly the same words on the pages of *Lotta continua*. In fact, Lenin was one of the figures that the newspaper refuted in 1977, when it drastically reviewed its political positions, opening up to theories that were incompatible with workerism, like the theory of human needs (Sorgonà 2017: 71).

The Italian radical left, between 1969 and 1976, seems to have been closer primarily to the socialism of the Second International, from which it derived ideas like the binary conception of Western societies, the deterministic view of the revolution, and the conviction that certain social subjects are intrinsically revolutionary. The radical left survived the dismantlement of the extra-parliamentary groups, and it underwent deep changes. How the perception of the Arab-Israeli question transformed after 1976 is not a focus of this paper, but it is possible to formulate a few hypothesis. My impression is that the word Zionism is still a word used to define many things, and that can be used to criticise plenty of phenomena, from the progressive leaderships that advocate for dialogue, to the nationalistic ones that after 1977, and especially with the beginning of the new millennium (Marzano 2017: 155–174; 195–209), have radicalised and worsened the conflict. There has been instead a turn in regards the use of violence in political conflict, in line with the development in the Italian radical left of neo-pacifist, non-violent, and environmentalist positions. This, together with a deeper understanding of the Holocaust, has rendered irrelevant the few fringes of extremists that links the lawful claims for Palestinian rights to Israel's right to exist.

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The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict as Seen by the Spanish Left from the Gulf War Until Today

Manuelle Peloille

The first aim of this work is the analysis of the image of the conflict between Israel and Palestine in the newspaper of the Communist Party of Spain (PCE) *Mundo Obrero*, and in its theoretical organ *Nuestra Bandera*, from the Gulf War to the present day. Since the return to parliamentary democracy in 1977, the Spanish Left has been increasingly critical about Israel's policies, and sometimes of Israel as a nation. Although a secondary global power, Spain hosted in 1991 the Conference for Peace, prior to the Oslo Accords of 1993, with the intent of normalizing relations between Israel and the Arab nations. The study investigates the connection between anti-Zionism, intended as criticism of Israel's policy, and the aversion of the Arab world to accept the existence of the State of Israel.

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The State of the Art: Left-Wing Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism in Spain

Most of the literature in English about the links between antisemitism and the Left (Brustein & Roberts 2015; Cesarani 2004; Herf 2006; Hirsh 2018; Jacobs 2017), does not consider Spain, except for Wistrich, who denounces the openly pro-Palestinian policy of Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero (2004–2011) (Wistrich 2012: 581–582). In regard to France, we can read Michel Dreyfus's book *L'antisémitisme à gauche* (Dreyfus 2009) and Olivier Wieviorka's *La tentation antisémite* (Wieviorka 2005). These works raise questions on whether antisemitism has roots only in the right, if it is instead accidental on the Left, or if instead it is part of the latter's main ideological stances. For Dreyfus, the answer to this last question is no. As far as Spain is concerned, the long philo-Semitic tradition of nineteenth-century liberals was a powerful obstacle to the development of antisemitism on the Left. The comparative study *The socialism of fools? Leftists Origin of Modern Anti-Semitism* (Brustein & Roberts 2015) defends the thesis that there are deep relations between the Left and antisemitism, arguing against two commonly accepted ideas. The first is that the Left has played no role in promoting antisemitism in the political discourse, and the second one is that only the right has engaged in antisemitic rhetoric. For the authors of the book, anti-capitalism is not the only link to antisemitism, as there are many others, like the Catholic vision of Judaism as a backward religion, and the Jews' social withdrawal, considered an obstacle to their integration into national communities.

Antisemitism within the Spanish Left has not been studied systematically enough. Fernando Bravo Lopez's PhD thesis establishes links between two distinct terms, antisemitism and the hatred of Muslims, in his work referred to as the term "Islamophobia" (Bravo Lopez 2009 & 2012). Gonzalo Alvárez Chillida dedicates a few pages to leftist antisemitism (Alvárez Chillida 2002: 207–213, 465–470). He shows that some left-wing thinkers of the second half of the nineteenth century broke away from the philo-Semitic narrative of Spanish liberalism, due to their fight with Catholic's intolerance, a deep-rooted tradition in the country's history. Indeed, anti-clericalism on the Left often pushed the Spanish progressive currents to defend the Jewish cause.

Alvárez Chillida also argued that the influence of French thinkers like Proudhon or Toussenel is perceptible in Spain. For instance, in the works

of Sixto Cámara, antisemitism is shaped by the centuries-old association of Jews with bankers. While recognizing their role in the history of humanity, in his book published in 1849 *La cuestión social, Examen crítico de la obra de Thiers titulada "De la propiedad"*, he argued that the Jews had taken over all European countries and rules the continent. At the end of the century, successful novelist Vicente Blasco Ibáñez talked of Jewish people as persecuted, and, later on, as an emancipated group that commanded the economy.

His target were the two great politicians of the era, Sagasta and Cánovas, whom he presented as the lapdogs of the Rothschild family. This was his populist way of drawing attention to the frantic speculation by foreigners on the Spanish mines and railways, as well as on its national debt. Occasional antisemitic remarks can be found in the works of socialist politician Fernando Garrido and of anarchist Fermín Salvochea.

On the other hand, the vision of a supranational Jewish religion encouraged some liberals to assimilate the Jews with the Jesuit Order, also called "black Judaism", and despised by Romero, Quiñones and Blasco Ibáñez. With the Dreyfus Affair, manifestations of antisemitism ceased, before re-emerging in Blasco Ibáñez's novels *Los muertos mandan* (1908) and *Luna Benamor* (1909). Later on, after 1917, Jews and Bolsheviks were accused of fomenting a conspiracy to build a global empire. To put it simply, for Alvárez Chillida (Alvárez Chillida 2002: 211), "anti-Semitism did not spread, more generally speaking, through the late nineteenth-century Spanish Left, probably because of the presence of the current philo-Semite revision of the history of Spain".

Chillida also discusses a new form of left-wing antisemitism that appeared after the Six-Day War (Alvárez Chillida 2002: 465–470). According to him, the European Left followed Stalin's turnaround about Israel in 1949, shifting from supporting it to a persistent anti-Zionism that lasted even through the period under consideration here. Israel's alliance with the US, the adherence of Arab states to the movement of non-alignment (and yet closer to the USSR), and the representation of Palestine as the exemplary antagonist of US imperialism contributed to fueling an anti-Zionist feeling. This, however, according to Chillida, should not be confused with antisemitism, since criticism of Israeli policy cannot be equated with the attribution of essentially negative characteristics to Jewish people. Interestingly, the example he quotes in this sense is not Spanish but Italian: the reaction of Primo Levi to the massacres of Sabra and Shatila in 1982, under the Begin government, in an interview with Giampaolo

Pansa for *La Repubblica* (Levi 2000). However, Chillida also acknowledges that some Spanish anti-Zionists use a certain number of typical anti-Jewish commonplaces, and that the anti-Zionism of some "is only a new label to denounce the criminal character of the eternal Jew" (Alvárez Chillida 2002: 469). This critical shift from a criticism to Israel to antisemitism often rests on the idea that Israel is a capitalist bourgeois state linked to US imperialism, and an expansionist nation taking aim at Arabs and Palestinians, which justifies the assimilation of Zionists to the Nazis. These two ideas found their ways onto the pages of *Mundo Obrero*, the periodical of the Communist Party of Spain. I analyzed this publication from the time of the Gulf War (1990–1991) until 2005. Additionally, I researched the positions of Podemos, a political movement founded in 2015 on the ideas of philosophers Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In the press of this organization, the discourse about Israel proceeds in four ways: identification, asymmetry, being the vector of foreign forces, and implicit negation.

Sources and Definitions

The organ of the Communist Party of Spain *Mundo Obrero* started in 1930 as a daily paper, then became weekly, and finally, due to lack of economic support, monthly from 1991 on. Instead, *Nuestra Bandera*, the theoretical medium of the Communist Party of Spain, pays little interest to the Israeli-Palestinian question in the considered timeframe, except for the period of the Gulf War (Laso Prieto 1991).

It is often difficult to distinguish anti-Judaism, which has a religious origin, from antisemitism, which marks the Jews both as inside and outside a national community, by endowing them with permanent characteristics. Anti-Zionism is something else entirely, consisting of criticizing the State of Israel, or Israel's policy, for example at the time of Begin (Herf 2006; Hecker 2011). While Spain has a long anti-Judaic tradition—linked to the formation of a composite monarchy whose only foundation of unity was Catholicism—antisemitism and anti-Zionism are less prevalent in the country, primarily because in Spain, in 2001 there were fewer than 20,000 Jews, compared, for instance, to some 600,000 in France. For General Franco, it was not the "Jew" who served as the social scapegoat essential to the cohesion of the community, but the "Red" (the word was applied to all the left, not only to Communists). This explains why Franco's attitude towards the Jews shifted in the 1940s. He let some of them pass into

Spain but allowed one of his pro-Nazi ministers to make a list of 6000 Jews to be delivered to the Germans (Reverte 2010; Israel Garzón 2007). Anti-Zionism appeared within the extreme right in the 1960s, as well as in the anti-colonialist spheres.

Four Bridges Connecting Anti-Zionism to Antisemitism

In general terms, under the anti-Zionist umbrella, we can find the critique of the politics of a state whose existence is recognized, but at the same time denied under the guise of pacifism and the defense of an oppressed people. The analysis becomes even more complicated when examining the different tendencies and phases of Zionism. There were supporters of an orthodox religious state as well as of a secular state, of a multinational state and of the numerical crushing of the Arab minority, together with a socialist Zionist trend. The difference between anti-Zionism and antisemitism, between criticism of Israel's policies and calling for the destruction of the Jews, was reaffirmed in the year 2000 by the communist monthly *Mundo Obrero*: "Zionism treats all Palestinians and other non-Jewish inhabitants as second rank citizens. Fighting Zionism has nothing to do with fighting the Jews. In fact, many progressive Jews have always expressed themselves against Zionism".[1]

However, there are some ambiguities between anti-Zionist and antisemitic discourses. According to Mitchel Cohen, both discourses are usually fueled by insinuations, complaints, clichés, and recriminations (Cohen 2017). In fact, we can add that the matrix of anti-Zionist discourses grows at the same time as the formation of the Zionist movement, and not only from antisemites.

This is clear in Victor Klemperer's personal diaries, (Klemperer 1999), in which he discusses the process through which the Jews were uprooted from Germany through banishment from society and extermination by the Nazis, and that led to a desire for new roots in Palestine. As in nineteenth-century Spain, persecution is seen by Klemperer as the reason behind the actions of the Jews of his time. A supporter of the idea of assimilation, Klemperer defined himself as "Liberal and German, forever" (Klemperer 1999: 417. 1939. November 12), and was very critical of Zionism for the following four reasons.

[1] 2000. *Mundo obrero*, 111, December: 7.

First, Klemperer criticizes Zionism because it replaces the narrow nationalism of Germany with a similar approach: "We hear a lot about Palestine now. It does not appeal to us. Anyone who goes there exchanges nationalism and narrowness for nationalism and narrowness. Also it is a country for capitalists" people who have 10 or 15,000 DM (Klemperer 1999: 55. 1933. July 9). It is a position close to that of Max Aub, a Spanish writer exiled in 1939, who refused in 1967 to claim his Jewishness after returning from his trip to Israel, as can be read in his diaries (Aub 1998: 387. 1967. January 12):

> I thought I had something Jewish not because of the blood (poor blood, what does it knows about that?) but because of the religion of my ancestors—my parents weren't Jews—and I came here with the idea that I was going to feel something, I didn't know what, that I was going to face myself. And there was nothing. I have nothing to do with these people that is not the same thing as with others, as I have nothing to do with the Germans, nor with the Poles, nor with the Japanese, nor with the Argentinians. My links are with the Mexicans, the Spaniards, the French and some, perhaps, with the English. Perhaps more with the Spaniards, but only, perhaps, with those of my own time.
>
> No, I do not have anything Jewish. I'm sorry, but I cannot cry, they are strange to me, as much or even more than the Norwegians or the Turks.

Secondly, Klemperer defends the aspirations of the Arabs settled in Palestine before the Jewish migrations, underlying the Arabs' poor social and living conditions. The French translation emphasizes the influence on him of Nazi propaganda:

> I cannot help myself, I sympathise with the Arabs who are in revolt there, whose land is being 'bought'. A Red Indian fate, says Eva. In recent days once at the Blumenfelds and visited Gusti Wieghardt once. In remembrance of the Gerstle case, Gusti railes against the 'dirty Jews' in Palestine, capitalists falling upon the Arabs. (After this, in the English tran=slation appear only […], but in the French one we can read just after: Education to antisemitism by the Nazis?"). (Klemperer 1999: 75. 1933. November 2).

Thirdly, he denounces narrow nationalism, based on the search for common roots, for in his eyes blood justifies the assimilation between the Zionists and the Nazis:

> To me the Zionists, who want to go back to the Jewish state of AD 70 (destruction of Jerusalem by Titus) are just as offensive as the Nazis. With their nosing after blood, their ancient 'cultural roots', their partly canting, partly obtuse winding back of the world they are altogether a match for the National Socialists" (June 13, 1933) and "And in what way are the Zionists different from the Nazis? People treat reason as if it were the most minor and harmful aspect of a whole human being". (Klemperer 1999: 111. 1936. October 18).

Klemperer repeats this concept three times, but adds a nuance in his diary entry of January 10, 1939. The Jews become, in his eyes, backward barbarians because they let themselves be dragged by the Nazis into a world of discrimination between races and communities. While it is possible to say that settlement projects in Uganda and Palestine predated Nazism, for Klemperer Nazism provided a new impetus that had to be resisted.

Fourthly, Hitler appears as the indirect promoter of Zionism, which justifies Klemperer's criticism:

> The pure or the religious Zionist cause is something for sectarians and of no importance to the majority, very private and backward like all sectarian matters, a kind of open-air museum, like the Old Dutch village near Amsterdam. It seems complete madness to me, if specially Jewish states are now to be set up in Rhodesia or somewhere. That would be letting the Nazis throw us back thousands of years. The German Jews concerned are committing a crime—admittedly one must grant them extenuating circumstances—if they agree to this game. It is part of the *Lingua tertii imperii* that the expression 'Jewish people' appears repeatedly in the *Jüdische Nachtrichtenblatt*, that there are repeated references to Jewish states or Jewish colonies to be founded as dependencies of an ideal Palestine. (Klemperer 1999: 383. 1939. January 10).

The first three arguments were taken up in the Sixties and Seventies by the global Left. However, the difference between Aub and Klemperer on the one hand, and the Left parties on the other, is their assimilationist view of people of Jewish origin, wanting to male them full members of the nations where they live. Especially after the Gulf War, Spanish communists, in case of an armed conflict between Israel and Palestine, always supported the more oppressed Palestinians, for both ideological and financial reasons.

In *Mundo Obrero*, the identification between Israel and the Nazis intensified over time, first in 1990, and then after September 11, 2001, during the Iraqi War. The Spanish position is similar to that found in European communist circles. Border controls "are reminiscent of Nazi practices with Jews," claims Isam Salem in the interview "*La paz es lo mejor*".[2] Such parallelism is not new, and in line with the Palestine Communist Party (PCP). Since its creation, the Party supported the Palestinians without hiding its admiration for the Muslim Brotherhood. The *Histadrut* Union was often referred to as "Nazi" by the PCP, which did not question the collaboration between Arabs and Nazis (Wistrich 2012: 566–568).

> The Communist Party of Spain denounces the escalation of murders committed by the racist Government of Israel, that using Nazi methods is bringing an entire population to the maximun despair.[3]

An Asymmetrical Conflict?

Usually, anti-Zionist propaganda relies on the asymmetrical or dissymmetrical nature of the conflict, portraying Palestine as the defenseless victim of imperialist or colonial Jewish power. On the first page of the article dedicated to Israel in the theoretical review of PCE's *Nuestra Bandera* in January 1991, this idea is expressed with a photograph. In the foreground, an Israeli soldier, viewed from the back, his body forming a well-defined triangle, a rifle hanging on his back and a baton extending his right arm, is ready to strike. A group of (supposedly) Palestinians are on the ground. The background, blurred by the picture's shallow depth, puts the emphasis on an asymmetrical conflict,[4] that corresponds in part with a real asymmetry in military power.

In the communist press, only Palestinians are presented as victims. The Israeli victims are erased, in the same way as the Palestine Communist Party turned a blind eye to the pogroms perpetrated during the inter-war period. The use of children in combat, on the front line, and for propaganda with images that seek to arouse the viewers' feelings, is a crucial element of this asymmetrical representation of the conflict.[5]

[2] Salem, Isam. 1992. La paz es lo meyor. *Mundo Obrero,* 7: 15.
[3] Press release of the Communist Party of Spain, 2001. *Mundo Obrero*, 120.
[4] 1991. *Nuestra Bandera* 148: 44.
[5] 2002. Palestina sangra. *Mundo Obrero,* 127.

This asymmetry justifies the demands of both the PCE and the new leftist organization Podemos (from 2015), such as the recognition of the Palestinian state and the pressure of the international community that supports of the Palestinian heroes (Bustindoy & Perejil 2016). But they do not take into account these two elements: that Israel is surrounded by Arab nations that have their own regional ambitions, and that the Palestinian cause has received financial, military, and communication support from Arab countries like Saudi Arabia, and from the European Commission. *Mundo Obrero* becomes *de facto* a platform for the *Comité de Solidaridad con la Causa Árabe*, founded in 1986 with the following purpose:

> To approach the reality of the Arab world, its problems and the aspirations of its peoples to the solidarity of the progressive and alternative sectors and to influence the external projection of the Spanish State traditionally turned towards Hispanic America. (Comité de Solidaridad con la Cause Árabe, CSCAweb: nodo50.org/csca/nosotros.html)

The targets of the propaganda of the *Comité de Solidaridad con la Causa Árabe* are the alternative sectors of the Left. The Communist monthly published many inserts, texts by its director Carlos Barea, and proposals of subscriptions to the magazine *Nación Arabe*. This is a pan-Arab project that does not take into account the national options chosen by countries such as Egypt or Turkey, and which includes Palestine, new forum for popular emancipation and the torchbearer of solidarity-based internationalism after the collapse of the USSR in 1991. Anti-Zionism, always a complement of the anti-British and anti-American tradition, intensified after 1991. These newspapers, popular among supporters of a secular and peaceful state of Israel, overlook the fact that Israel is surrounded by Arab states, as well as the aims of Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt, and of the supporters of openly terrorist organizations such as Hamas, whose goal is the destruction of Israel and of the Jews of the Middle East. In *Mundo Obrero* we see a reversal of the burden of terrorism, as Israel becomes a terrorist state paid by the US, and Palestinian terrorists as a "resistance" in a state of "self-defense".[6] Alvárez Chillida has overlooked the penetration of pan-Arab and pan-Islamic propaganda in the circles of the Spanish left. *Mundo Obrero* is a platform for Palestinian

[6] 2002. *Mundo Obrero*, 2002: 128–129.

or Arab leaders, such as Mayed Nassar, Nassar Ibrahim, Omar Khattabi, and Marwan Abdulal. Hussein Triki, representative of the Arab League in Hispanic America, is clearly antisemitic. For him, Zionism is part of the global Jewish conspiracy, and antisemitism a Jewish instrument of criminal domination in Palestine (Triki 1977). His book entitled *Here is Palestina* has been translated into Spanish and French, but not into English, and his theses repeated by Hezbollah. Communists may also have a debt with Islamo-Marxism, that was theorized in the Seventies by Ali Shariati (Wistrich 2012: 563). This is not to say that *Mundo Obrero* had become an antisemitic newspaper, but that it is permeable to openly antisemitic pan-Arab circles, that, not content with demanding the disappearance of Israel, want the annihilation of all the Jews.

It is also to be noted that even if the open denial of the state of Israel is rare in the columns of *Mundo Obrero*, it remains nevertheless implicit. It claims that Israel is a creation of the Balfour Declaration, and therefore cannot have an existence of its own. Extending this, it presents Israel as a US puppet, or as the "policeman of North American imperialism", "a dart planted among oil-exporting countries" (Bollo Muro 1982). The claim of manipulation is mirrored by the propaganda, like that of German magazine *Adler* at the height of the Second World War, which presented the King of the West Bank as a "puppet" of Roosevelt, or, in 2003, the opponents of Saddam Hussein as "puppets" of Bush. The strategic interest of the Jewish state in the eyes of Great Britain and the US can hardly be denied, but their policy was less one-sided than alleged by the leftist discourse. First, the British sought to limit illegal Jewish immigration by the imposition of resource conditions, and played the Arab card in 1939. And second, before Trump's presidency, North Americans did not finance Israel with lost funds. The country had to produce value in order to honor its debts, which supposes its existence as a nation.

A Simple, Non-Dialectic Interpretation

As we have seen, in *Mundo Obrero*, there are still traces left of the debates of the Spanish Left of the Fifties, Sixties, and Seventies on whether Israel was an example of democratic nationalism or a form of colonialism. In conclusion, it is clear that the PCE's organ departs considerably from the dialectical materialism of the Marxist tradition that looked at events not in isolation, but in terms of relations to given conditions. The theoretical basis is considerably weakened, and both the relations between social

classes and between imperialist powers are evaded in favor of a binary vision of the "good" colonized Palestinians against the "wicked" and rapacious Israelis, white doves against hawks.

Since the realization of the Zionist project, there is permanence of sympathy for the Palestinian cause, and a persistence of the assimilation between Zionist Jews and Nazis. The worsening of the conflicts after the fall of the Communist bloc seems to have gone hand in hand with the hardening of anti-Zionist positions and the diffusion of uninhibited antisemitic positions, especially under Aznar's Government (1996–2004). For Spain, 2004 was a key year, with a change in government, and therefore also of certain political alliances. Following the Islamist attack of March 11th, 2004, the new prime minister, Rodríguez Zapatero, distanced himself from the United States and openly supported the Palestinian cause.

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